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TODAY

Strike off today after mass shutdown

EVELYN GORDON and Itim

SOME 250,000 workers went on strike yesterday, as the nation suffered yet another day of work stoppages that shut down vital services, affecting everything from banks to Internet connections. The strike affected almost the entire public sector, although unlike Sunday's shutdowns, yesterday saw the strike broken at several work places. Finance Minister Dan Meridor and Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz met for three hours last night to discuss the ongoing strike. After a meeting with the strike committee, Peretz announced that Histadrut officials had decided to cancel today's strike for 24 hours. Meridor earlier said he would prefer to negotiate with the Histadrut rather than be forced to issue more restraining orders. He accused the Histadrut of running roughshod over the legal system and undermining the Knesset's standing as a legislative body. "It is time for the Histadrut and its leadership to show some responsibility and stop this step, which has no real justification or real reason," he said. He denied the strike broke out because of a lack of communication between the government and the Histadrut. According to the Histadrut, the strike is largely directed against two elements of the economic arrangements bill accompanying the budget - a proposal to tax the ports, airports, and railways, and a proposal to eliminate the extra half tax-credit married women currently enjoy. The latter, which was a last-minute addition to the bill on the government's part, is to come up for a vote in the plenum this afternoon. (See story, Page 3) The former, however, is essentially a lost cause, since it was approved in second reading last week. Once a section of a bill has been approved in second reading, the only way for it to be killed would be for the coalition to vote against the entire bill. Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon met yesterday with both Meridor and Peretz, but said afterward that he did not intend to try to mediate between the two. Tichon said the purpose of the meeting was merely to understand the two sides' positions, since the dispute may result in procedural arguments being raised during the voting on the economic arrangements bill. Tichon would have to rule on any such arguments. According to an aide to Tichon, Peretz said that President Ezer Weizman had called him from India to ask him to end the strike. Meridor reiterated to Tichon that he sees no justification in giving women an extra tax credit just because they are women, as opposed to the tax credits they get, for instance, for having children. "He told Tichon he is willing to sit down and talk with Peretz at any point, but on condition that the strikers obey injunctions issued by the labor courts. The government cannot countenance contempt of the courts, he said. From 6 a.m. yesterday, the nation's health system, including Kupat Holim clinics, government hospitals, and community services were shut down. Hospitals were on a Shabbat footing, and hundreds of operations and treatments

(Continued on Page 3)

US: No deadlines in Hebron pact

Ross meets PM, Arafat to close deal

DAVID MAKOVSKY and JON IMMANUEL

THE attached American document accompanying the Hebron accord is not expected to include future deadlines related to Palestinian and Israeli compliance with the Oslo Accords, with the exception of the first IDF pullback beyond Hebron and the resumption of final status talks, US officials said yesterday. Special Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross, who returned here yesterday in a bid to seal the deal, met last night with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and then was expected to begin talks with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. Ross is expected to meet again with Netanyahu today to follow-up the Arafat meeting. The results of those meetings will determine if there is an adequate basis for a meeting today between Netanyahu and Arafat to initial the deal. One official put the odds at "50-50."

Israel has been seeking an American document, called "Note for the Record," which will deal with questions of extradition of suspected Palestinian terrorists, disarming Hamas, and reducing the size of Palestinian security forces. However, no deadlines are attached. Senior Israeli officials have already admitted that there is no linkage in the US document between Israeli and Palestinian compliance. It is also possible that there may be a date for the release of four Palestinian prisoners who were accomplices to murder. In the document, Israel agrees to open parallel talks on other issues such as safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza, the opening of an airport in Gaza, and the easing of the closure. In terms of dates, the

Palestinians are seeking assurances that Netanyahu will implement all three further pullbacks in the West Bank, and not seek to skip the last two by jumping directly to final status talks. Arab and Israeli officials indicated last night. While the Palestinians are seeking dates on all three additional pullbacks, some believe that they would be content with general language. Israel has committed itself to provide an exact date for the first pullback, but not the two others. According to the Oslo 2 agreement, all three pullbacks are scheduled to occur by next September. Netanyahu has said he prefers to move up the final status talks, believing that the three pullbacks deprive him of territorial leverage, before dealing with such thorny issues as Jerusalem. "We have exhausted the negotiations," one Netanyahu aide said last night. "If there are differences, they should be discussed between the leaders themselves; there is nothing more we can do."

Officials in the Prime Minister's Office say that Netanyahu also told Ross that Israel will not agree to joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols around the Maschpela Cave. Some have described this as a "red-line." One alternative being considered is that the Moslem Waqf at the Cave would begin a liaison relationship with the local Israeli-Palestinian coordinating office. Jamil Tariqi, the head of the Palestinian civilian delegation, told Israel Radio last night that there are aspects of construction in Jewish areas of Hebron that have not been resolved. However, Israel considers the civilian section of the accord closed.



US special envoy Dennis Ross (center), accompanied by US ambassador Martin Indyk (right), arrives at the Knesset for a meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday. (Reuters)

Arafat's deputy Mahmoud Abbas said he "hoped" an agreement would be reached by today. Yesterday's talks were given a boost by the apparent success of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's meeting with Arafat on Sunday night. Mordechai himself said the talks "with Abu Amr [Arafat's nom-de-guerre] were excellent. The chairman gave

guidelines to his team to go forward, and I think we can diminish the gaps considerably. If that happens the prime minister, and Chairman Arafat will arrange a meeting through Dennis Ross." Yesterday's talks took place on several levels - security, drafting, and civil. Some negotiators continued to return to Gaza and report back to Arafat.

"Redeployment from Hebron will take place a week after the announcement of an agreement," negotiator Moharumed Dahlan, head of Palestinian preventive security in Gaza, told Reuters. Saeb Erekat said the two sides would discuss increasing the international observer force in Hebron to include Turkey, Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as Norway.

US to help Israel capitalize on agreement

DAVID MAKOVSKY

THE US has pledged to help Israel seize the momentum of a Hebron pullback agreement to improve its low regional standing. US officials said yesterday.

"We have told Israel that we will help it gain a bounce from a Hebron deal to help its regional position," said one US official, who would only say that he expects even the Egyptians to play a constructive role to this end. Foreign Ministry officials say they are holding preliminary consultations with Arab countries to improve Israel's troubled regional position, which has deteriorated over the last several months.

Egypt has been one of the Netanyahu government's fiercest regional critics and has counseled the Palestinians not to accept Israeli positions in negotiations. Egyptian sources also complain that Israel has not consulted it enough during the talks. Yet last week, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak informed Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai that he would invite Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to Cairo after a Hebron deal.

Egyptian officials said last night that an exact date has yet to be fixed.

Netanyahu was last in Egypt in July, but subsequently Mubarak said he would not invite him back because he felt he violated a promise to pull out of Hebron within weeks. For the same reason, Mubarak did not attend the White House summit convened by President Bill Clinton after the Western Wall Tunnel incident. Also due to the tunnel affair.

(Continued on Page 2)

Palestinian killed in Gush Katif

A PALESTINIAN who entered the Kfar Darom settlement in Gush Katif and tried to attack a resident there was shot and killed last night, a settlement spokesperson said. The incursion took place at about 10:15 p.m. IDF officials believe, after an initial investigation, that the Palestinian

was unarmed and without identification papers. They said he was shot, while sneaking into the settlement, by a resident who was following IDF regulations for shooting someone suspected of infiltration. Kfar Darom residents were instructed by the IDF to stay inside their homes. Herb Keiron

Tax-credit proposal defeated

THE government's proposal to eliminate the half tax-credit enjoyed by married women was defeated late last night,

but the rest of the Economic Arrangements Law accompanying the budget passed its second reading. Story, Page 3

Israelis love Arafat... when he's a puppet

Jerusalem Post Staff

YASSER Arafat may not win any popularity contests among the Israeli public, but the doll that imitates him on Channel 2's *Hartza'im* satire program was the hands-down winner in a Gallup poll for Army Radio this week. Of the 511 people surveyed, 15.9 percent said the Arafat doll, whose fast-talking, snoring charm always steals the show, is their favorite. In second place was the doll modelled after Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, with 10%. Opposition leader Shimon Peres took third place, with 6.7%, while Finance Minister Dan Meridor got 5.9%. Army Radio host Razi Barkai revealed the list of most-popular dolls on "The Headlines" yesterday, and then phoned Arafat's Israeli Arab advisor, Dr. Ahmed Tibi, to find out what his boss thinks of the show. "Alas, Tibi said, Arafat has never seen *Hartza'im* because his TV doesn't receive Channel 2 broadcasts. "If someone wants to send him a tape, I'm sure he'd like to watch it," Tibi said. "He's a warm, family-like character," Tibi said, which is the exact opposite of the Israeli public's impression of him in real life. "Abu Mazen [Mahmoud Abbas] asked me why his doll was wearing a red keffiyeh," Tibi told Barkai, noting that red keffiyehs are Jordanian.

Tibi admitted that Palestinian satire is virtually nonexistent. "We haven't found an actor whose impersonations are as good as those of Tuvia Tsafir," he said, referring to the voice behind all the male dolls on the program. Tsafir also put in an appearance on the show, admitting that the voice of Labor MK Ehud Barak is one of the more difficult for him to copy. Despite all of Tsafir's effort, the Barak doll only rated eighth, with 1%, behind those of Ya'akov Ayalon, 3.1%, Tsomet leader Raphael Eitan, 2.3%, and Geshet leader David Levy, 1.8%. Barak's doll did manage to tie with Shas Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and to soundly top Communication Minister Limor Livnat and Science Minister Ze'ev Binyamin Begin, whose dolls attracted 0.4% and 0.2% respectively. The Gallup survey also asked people to rank their least favorite characters on the show. Interestingly, the top four were the same as on the most-loved list - Netanyahu led with 7.6%, followed by Arafat, 6.5%, Meridor, 3.9%, and Peres, 2.5%. However, Livnat tied with Peres for fourth place. Ayalon, Levy, Barak, Eitan, Yosef and Begin also made the least favorite list. They were joined by Sarah Netanyahu, Shas leader Aryeh Deri and Avigdor Lieberman, director of the Prime Minister's Office.

Woman, 52, gives birth to triplets

A 52-YEAR-OLD woman from Moshav Shalva in the South yesterday gave birth to her first children - triplets - by cesarean section at Beersheba's Soroka Hospital. She is the oldest woman in the country to give birth to triplets.

The woman, Tova Gamliel, and her husband Zion were thrilled over the birth of the healthy triplets, two boys and a girl. She had been hospitalized for a prolonged period at Soroka's high-risk pregnancy unit. The hospitals did not disclose whether the ova had been donated by another woman, but this is usually the case when older women undergo IVF. Judy Siegel

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PM promises Hebron pact will be presented to Knesset for approval

Government handily defeats no-confidence bid

PRIME Minister Binyamin Netanyahu promised coalition MKs yesterday that the Hebron agreement would be submitted to the Knesset to vote on after it had been endorsed by the government. Netanyahu was hesitant to say when the agreement would be ready but said the negotiations are reaching a conclusion. He said the new agreement has at least 10 improvements on that reached by the previous government. He did not list all 10 points but noted that Jews in Hebron would not be in the range of fire of Palestinian forces; that an Israeli presence would be maintained on the hills overlooking the area of Hebron under Jewish control; and that the Jewish quarter "would not be strangled." He also said Jewish residents would not be dependent on the Arab Hebron Municipality for building permits.

LIAT COLLINS

The prime minister promised that Israel did not intend to leave or evacuate the Jewish settlement and would even strengthen it. He stressed that the agreement called for a redeployment in Hebron and not withdrawal from it. Science Minister Binyamin Ze'ev Begin, however, criticized the agreement saying that despite the improvements, 80 percent of the city was being handed over to Palestinian security control and that if Israel trusted the Palestinians so much they would not have to place so many restrictions on weapons there. Begin said that the limits on the quantities of arms had already been breached. The relationship between the prime minister and Begin seemed tense. When Begin thanked the premier for raising the Hebron

issue at the coalition meeting, Netanyahu said sarcastically: "I wanted to give you a chance to read your speech." MK Yehuda Harel (Third Way) said his faction had "confidence in the government" and he called on the rest of the coalition to also offer the government and prime minister support. Harel said the Third Way would remain in the coalition as long as the government does not violate certain principles: that Israel continue to withdraw from the parts of Judea and Samaria heavily populated by Arabs; that the redeployment does not harm Israeli control in Greater Jerusalem, the full length of the Jordan Valley, the south Hebron Hills and large settlement blocs not populated by Arabs; and that Israeli sovereignty on the Golan Heights would be the basis for any peace agreement with Syria.

MKS voted with their feet during yesterday's no-confidence motion over the Hebron agreement. The motion was defeated 47-2 with 34 abstentions, as only the two Moledet MKs, who had filed the no-confidence motion, supported it. A large number of MKs chose to absent themselves or not participate in the vote. Members of the National Religious Party, Democratic Arab Party, Shas, and Tsomet, other than Eliezer Zandberg, left the plenum before the vote. Several cabinet members were also noticeably absent: National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, Agriculture and Environment Minister Raphael Eitan, Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, and Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy. Science Minister Ze'ev Binyamin Begin voted with the government, saying it is his obligation as a member of the cabinet. He differentiated between the no-confidence motion and the vote on the Hebron agreement itself. Eitan said his absence was a message to the prime minister that the agreement is dangerous. Just before the vote, in an apparent effort to placate coalition partners, Foreign Minister David Levy told the plenum that the Hebron agreement will be presented for Knesset approval after it is signed and endorsed by the government. As a result, Michael Kleiner

LIAT COLLINS

(Gesher) voted with the government and said he would voice his opposition of the agreement when it came to the vote. Levy said Hebron will be a test for the continuation of the peace process and if peaceful coexistence is not preserved, there it will be a threat to the whole process. Moledet leader Rehavam Ze'evi said the government is leading to the creation of a Palestinian state. "Don't you see those of us who voted for you as partners? Who are you afraid of, Mr. Prime Minister? The US president? Are you scared of the Arabs? If so, you can't lead this Knesset. And you should know that war with the Arabs will break out when they see they have a chance to win, and it's not related to Oslo or the Palestinians." "We hoped and hoped, but in vain. We quickly discovered that the nationalist government is no more nationalist than its predecessor - and perhaps worse. The Netanyahu government is striding toward creating a Palestinian state." Levy stressed in his reply that Israel and the IDF could deal with the Palestinian response were it not to redeploy in Hebron, but would find it very difficult to cope with the interna-

tional backlash. He said that if the agreement in Hebron is not abided by and peace is not kept there, the whole process will collapse. He said Hebron is the test of reciprocity. Labor Party leader Shimon Peres proposed from the plenum concentrating on the Syrian track. "Don't delay. The price of peace doesn't go down; the cost goes up," he said. Peres said Labor has no confidence in the government and should not fudge its criticism of the way it reopened the agreement with the Palestinians and handled the negotiations. "What is there in Hebron? Holy places? The main holy places will stay in our hands under IDF responsibility," he said. Peres said the present government is so eager to blame its predecessors for all the problems that were the drought to continue, the cabinet secretary would issue a statement saying it the Peres government's fault. At a faction meeting before the discussions, the NRP "decided not to give the government our confidence over the Hebron agreement as it our confidence right now, but not to leave the government so we can continue the struggle for Hebron and on the permanent arrangements," Hammer said. The NRP is demanding that Hammer be included in the group of ministers discussing the next stages of the negotiations with the Palestinians.

Court: State must show why IDF exemptees are blocked from national service

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice yesterday gave the state 45 days to explain why Arabs and Jewish men exempt from army service should not be able to volunteer for national service and get the attendant financial benefits. Justice Yitzhak Zamir issued the show-cause order in response to a petition by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and three individuals - Vivian Khoury, a Christian Arab; Marwat Marisat, a Beduin woman; and Eyal Daniel, a Jewish man exempt from the army for health reasons. The petition charged that not permitting Arabs or Jews who are exempt from regular service to volunteer for national service constitutes illegal discrimination, especially in light of the financial implications of that refusal. People who do either army or national service are entitled to financial benefits, such as mortgage and scholarship aid, and also are often given preference when applying for jobs or popular degree programs. In addition, the petition said, national service gives participants

a feeling of satisfaction and of belonging to society. About 18 months ago, the petition said, the Fund for Absorbing Demobilized Soldiers decided to accept Arabs and Jews exempt from regular army duty into national service programs at the recommendation of the Defense Ministry. A few months later, the National Insurance Institute - which is responsible for approving national service programs - decided to overturn this policy. The petition charged that the entire concept of linking financial rights to army service is discriminatory, as long as Arabs are not permitted to serve, because it means that only Jews get such benefits. However, it said, the discriminatory character of this policy seems even more blatant when Arabs are not even allowed to volunteer for national service. The government's rationale for the financial benefits has always been that those who do army or national service deserve compensation for the lost years of their lives. Arabs are not accepted into the army for security reasons.

New rules for judicial appointments

THE Committee for Judicial Appointments yesterday announced new rules for judicial appointments. As of March 3, the names of judicial candidates will be announced at least 21 days in advance, and anyone will be able to present the committee with detailed reasons for his opposition to any of the candidates. The committee also announced the names of 12 judicial appointments: To Tel Aviv District Court - Nissim Yeshaya, Hadassah Ahitov, and Hila Gensler, all of whom are currently serving on the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court; To Nazareth District Court - Aharon Aminof, currently serving on the Nazareth Magistrate's Court; To the Northern District Magistrate's Court - A'ada Sa'ad, who now serves on a labor court, the only female Arab judge in the country; Bracha Samson, and Esther Helman; To Jerusalem Family Court, Nili Maimon; To Tel Aviv Family Court - Yehuda Granit and Tzila Tzfat; and To Jerusalem Labor Court - Dita Prozhinin and Ari Tivon. The committee also decided to make permanent the appointment of Tel Aviv Labor Court Judge Yehoshua Halevy. (Itim)



Labor MK Ehud Barak (left) speaks to reporters alongside MK Uzi Baram, who announced yesterday he would not run for Labor Party leader but instead would support Barak's candidacy. (Brian Hendler)

Baram decides not to run, backs Barak

SARAH HONIG

LABOR MK Uzi Baram announced yesterday that he will not be competing for the party leadership and that he will back Ehud Barak. The two appeared together at a press conference and hotly denied that they had struck a deal promising Baram the No. 2 position in the party and the portfolio of his choice should Barak form a future government. Nevertheless, Baram coined the term "the Barak-Baram camp" and was careful throughout to use it. Labor leader Shimon Peres, who is being challenged by Barak, was reported to have called Baram's move "opportunism."

Yossi Beilin, who has also thrown his hat in the Labor leadership ring, welcomed Baram's decision, saying that since Barak is a hawk and Baram a renowned dove, "many of Baram's supporters have already called me and told me that they cannot bring themselves to support a man like Barak and that they are switching their allegiance to me." Baram had a lot of fancy explaining to do about his decision, since he had recently lashed out at Barak, calling him "a man full of suspicion and distrust. He is a paranoid. He practices power

politics and suffers from delusions of power and grandeur. His positions are worse than those of the right-wing." Baram did not fully retract these statements, and only said that "we have very different political outlooks, and Barak and I are very different personalities. He is new to politics and I don't really know him very well. We will continue deliberations and I hope there will be cooperation between us. I will be very happy if in future I can report that I have changed my mind." "We are very different people,"

Barak said. "We complement each other."

Baram claimed he decided not to run for the party leadership because of opinion polls which show that Barak has a better chance of winning. If Barak forms a government, Baram said he would like the Foreign Affairs portfolio, "though now, three-and-a-half years before the election, it would be silly to make deals over portfolios."

Jordanian Press Association joins calls against Israeli fair

AMMAN (AP) - The Jordanian Press Association yesterday joined the chorus calling for boycotting an Israeli trade fair due to start here on January 6. "Because of Israeli disregard for Arab rights [and] escalation of criminal practices against the Palestinian people... the association requests all journalists to boycott the exhibition and refrain from publishing any reports on it or visiting it," a press association memorandum said. It did not spell out what measures would be taken against those who attend the three-day event, at which high-tech Israeli products, garments, jewelry, and furniture will be displayed.

HELP

(Continued from Page 1) Jordan's King Hussein said that he too would ban Netanyahu until after the Hebron deal is complete. There is speculation that once a Hebron pullback occurs, Netanyahu will meet Hussein to revive their frayed ties. It remains unclear if Netanyahu or senior officials will be invited to the Persian Gulf and North Africa after a Hebron deal. Oman, Qatar, and Tunisia have announced they have frozen ties with Israel as a result of the deadlock on Hebron. Officials in the Prime Minister's Office originally hoped to capitalize on a Hebron deal by having Netanyahu visit the US in January, in an apparent bid to refashion his American media image as a peacemaker. However, the US has privately informed Netanyahu - who has already visited the US three times in six months - that January would be a poor month to visit.

Egypt extends detention of Azzam

CAIRO (Reuters) - Alleged Israeli spy Azzam Azzam made his first public appearance in an Egyptian court yesterday and was remanded in custody for another 45 days, witnesses said. Ali Wahbi, the judge presiding over the remand hearing, ordered Azzam, 35, out of a courtroom cage to defend himself in an emotional session attended by Israeli embassy officials and relatives, they added. Wahbi ordered Azzam, chief mechanic at an Israeli-owned textile factory in Egypt, to be held for a second 45-day period. Security authorities arrested Azzam in

Cairo last month along with Egyptian national Emadeddin Abdel Hamid. Azzam has not been formally charged and no date has been set for his trial. Arriving in the court, he hugged his two brothers and wept. One of the brothers is working in Egypt, security sources said. "Treatment is good at the prison and the consul is visiting me frequently," Azzam told reporters in a brief statement, before he asked them to talk only to his lawyer. The Israeli consul, Shuki Gabai, attended the session. The prosecutor said in his statement to the court: "This defendant wanted to harm the

country which is seeking peace... but they (the Israelis) repaid this with ingratitude." The prosecutor said Azzam had facilitated a sexual affair between Abdel Hamid and one of two Israeli-Arab women involved in the case but at large - Mona Ahmed Shawahna and Zahra Youssef Greiss. Azzam himself is of Arab origin. "He (Abdel Hamid) did not respond to Azzam's pressures for the sake of any principle, but in return for lusts, sex and money," he added. Azzam denied the espionage allegations. He said the last time he met Abdel Hamid was in Israel in February.

Among prosecution evidence were clothes described as producing invisible ink when washed. Israel has insisted Azzam is innocent and demands his release. A court earlier this month extended Abdel Hamid's detention for 45 days. The prosecution was expected to issue the charge sheet a few weeks ago, amid reports that it was waiting for a political decision in the case. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has said Israeli leaders squandered the chance to secure Azzam's release through quiet diplomacy by making the affair public.

NEWS IN BRIEF

118 hurt in road accidents
A total of 118 drivers, passengers and pedestrians were injured in 81 accidents across the country yesterday. Three people were hurt, one seriously, yesterday afternoon when three cars collided near Nebi Samwil on the Jerusalem-Givat Ze'ev road. A pedestrian was seriously injured after he was hit by a bus near the Afula bus station. Mustafa Abu Nimar, 24, of Tamra, near Acre, was killed Sunday night when his car hit a guard rail in his village after he lost control of the vehicle. (Itim)

Knesset clerk retires
Knesset Clerk Shmuel Jacobson resigned from his post yesterday after 46 years service in the House. Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon praised Jacobson for his work and extensive knowledge of the Knesset House Rules. His replacement Arie Hahn will assume the post tomorrow. Jacobson will continue to be a special Knesset adviser. (Liat Collins)

Immigrant doctors to keep jobs
Immigration and Absorption Committee chairwomen Nechmi Blumenthal (Likud) said the threat to fire 630 immigrant doctors had been lifted. She noted that Yisrael Ba'aliya MKs had told the Finance Committee that they would

make their support of the Health Ministry's budget conditional on the Finance Ministry's abiding by a promise to continue the funding of the doctors. (Liat Collins)

Lack of Reka news decried
Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein yesterday sent a strong letter of complaint to Israel Broadcasting Authority Director-General Mordechai Kirschenbaum, saying that the lack of news broadcasts on Reka, the radio station which broadcasts in Russian and Amharic, among other languages, had left hundreds of thousands of immigrants in the dark about the strike and what services were closed. Israel Radio continued its news broadcasts on other stations. (Liat Collins)

Chai Vekayam leader fined
Chai Vekayam leader Yehuda Etzion was sentenced to a NIS 1,000 fine and a suspended sentence for his attempts to pray on the Temple Mount. Etzion said that he would refuse to pay the fine and instead would serve a 20-day prison term. Etzion said the state should compensate him for not being able to pray on the Temple Mount, and not the opposite. He vowed to try to pray there again, after other court cases revolving around his previous attempts to do so are cleared up. (Itim)

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מכתבן האוכל



Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz addresses the thousands of women who demonstrated against the cancellation of the half-point tax credit for married women in the Wohl Rose Garden opposite the Knesset yesterday afternoon. (Brian Rindler)

Knesset nixes tax credit cut for women

EVELYN GORDON

THE government's proposal to eliminate the half tax-credit enjoyed by married women was defeated late last night, but the rest of the Economic Arrangements Law accompanying the budget passed its second reading.

The law's final reading will be today. The elimination of the tax credit was defeated in a roll-call vote 55-50, after all five Geshet MKs - including Foreign Minister David Levy and Deputy Finance Minister David Magen - voted with the opposition. Marina Solodkin (Yisrael Ba'Aliya), Emanuel Zissman (Third Way) and Shaul Yahalom (National Religious Party) also voted with the opposition, but Naomi Blumenthal (Likud), who had been threatening to do so, in the end voted with the coalition.

Normally, a minister cannot go against the coalition in a major vote such as the budget and still remain in the cabinet. Levy may escape because elimination of the half tax-credit was not officially a government proposal. Since the Treasury came up with the idea too late to include it in the actual bill, it was introduced as a private amendment by coalition chairman Michael Eitan (Likud). Voting against a private amendment to a government bill, even if the government happens to support the amendment, would not normally

force a minister to resign. The tax-credit proposal was introduced by the government late last week as partial compensation for elements of the economic arrangements bill that had been killed by the Knesset Finance Committee. It had been expected to save some NIS 270 million next year. The government is now left with a big hole in its NIS 7.2 billion deficit-reduction package. Most of the rest of the package is now only one step away from being law, however, since most of the budget cuts were contained in the Economic Arrangement Bill approved in second reading last night.

The vote could also have implications for the Histadrut strike. The strike was officially aimed at two proposals - taxation of ports, railways and airports and elimination of the half tax-credit. The ports tax is now closer to becoming law, as it was part of the Arrangements Bill. The latter, having been defeated, can no longer be a pretext for a strike. Michael Kleiner (Geshet) said his faction objected to the proposal because it would hurt low-income women. In addition, he said, the faction is annoyed that the government seems to have no money for social issues, but plenty for its coalition partners, and did not want to support cancella-

tion of the tax credit if the additional revenue would go mainly to fund what he called coalition giveaways.

Solodkin said she voted against the proposal because women at the same level in a job usually earn less than men, so the extra tax credit is justified to equalize this discrimination. During yesterday's debate, former finance minister Avraham Shohat (Labor) attacked Netanyahu, seizing the opportunity to get revenge for Netanyahu's attack on his management of the economy last week.

"We have a prime minister who is a liar," he said. "He piles lie on top of lie."

In other news, the Finance Committee approved another last-minute revenue-raiser proposed by the government: a proposal to make employers pay employees' sick leave for the first nine days out of work. Currently, employers pay only for the first day, after which the National Insurance Institute picks up the tab. This proposal is expected to bring in some NIS 30m. next year.

The proposal passed by a vote of 8-5, with Pini Badash (Tzomet) joining the opposition. Badash said he thought the proposal was too all-encompassing, affecting everyone from huge corporations to the ordinary working couple that employs a cleaning woman.

'There are no velvet struggles'

Histadrut reasserts its role

THE mood in the situation room at Histadrut headquarters in Jerusalem yesterday could be summed up in four words: revival of the dead.

Indeed, the door to the room where information from various strike centers was coming in was graced with a political cartoon showing a white-shrouded Histadrut chairman Amir Peretz leaping out of a coffin. In the process, he knocked over a petrified looking Binyamin Netanyahu. Revival of the dead.

"The Histadrut is not weak," said Shai Shani, director of its trade union department (and no relation to department chief Shlomo Shani, whose arrest Sunday sparked yesterday's intensified strikes.) He denied that proving the Histadrut's mettle, flexing its muscles, was one of the reasons for the strike that kept an estimated 250,000 people out of work, caused millions of shekels of damage to the economy, and led to untold inconvenience for millions of people.

"But we will not mind if this [show of strength] is one of the strike's by-products," Shani admitted. "We will not mind if the government knows we need to be taken seriously."

Shani, and Michel Elmaliah, in charge of the situation room, framed the strike in highly ideological terms. They spoke, confidently and aggressively, of defending the rights of the workers and looking out for the plight of the common man. They sounded as Histadrut leaders sounded a few decades ago, during the gigantic union federation's heyday; and not as heads of an organization tottering on the brink of a massive privatization plan that will significantly lessen its power.

The strike, the two insisted, was not a power

play or about politics. "This strike is not against the government," Elmaliah said. "The head of the Egged union is a Likud supporter, as is the head of the union at Ashdod port. This is totally a professional strike."

He said claims that the strike is intended to weaken the Netanyahu government are "ugly." Remember, said Shani, the Histadrut also fought with the Treasury under the previous Labor government, although not to the extent that it called for a general strike. Nevertheless, he said, this strike is about workers' rights, pure and simple.

But this point has not been adequately brought across to the public, Shani admitted, answering questions with his eyes closed, a sign of fatigue from the two days of tension and struggle.

But what the country is seeing are a plethora of signs on bank and office doors announcing they are closed. Signs, like one posted on the door of a Bank Hapoalim branch in Jerusalem's Zion Square that read: "In conjunction with the decision of the Histadrut, all the bank's branches will be closed."

The signs cause frustration. "This is crazy, I'm sick of it," said one woman who tried in vain to enter the bank. "I don't even know why they are striking."

This woman is definitely not alone. An unscientific Army Radio poll found that by mid-morning some 600 callers had phoned in to express support for the strike, while 1,700 said they were against it.

"I'm not surprised," said Shani, "because the public at large does not understand the signifi-

cance of trade unions, a trade union that represents 650,000 people and fights their battles."

Grasping at the silver lining in the Army Radio poll, Shani changed gears: "But for a union that represents 15 percent of the country, and which has had problems explaining the purpose of the strike, almost 30 percent support is not bad."

Explaining the strike, its reasons, and hour-by-hour developments was the job of the 10 people in the spacious situation room, which was not filled - as could have been expected - with either smoke or palpable tension. Throughout the day this group answered phones, crunched numbers, and munched on take-out pizza.

"The country is not behind us?" Elmaliah asked, responding to a question in a tone of disbelief. He turned to a wall-high chart listing all the organizations and companies that were closed yesterday, and replied: "Bezeq is not part of the country? Egged is not part of the country? The Israel Electric Corporation is not part of the country? The banks are not part of the country? What do you mean the country does not support us?"

To those annoyed that their lives were inconvenienced, Elmaliah said: "What are we supposed to do when the government takes hundreds of shekels away from the worker each month, sit back with arms folded?"

"When you embark on a struggle, there are victims on the way," he said. "We have tried to minimize the inconvenience, and - for example - did not close all the hospitals, did not close down operations necessary for the security of the state. But people are supposed to feel the strike. There are no velvet struggles. We want Netanyahu to feel the strike."

Peretz flexes his mustache

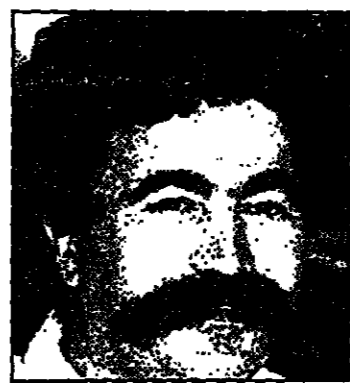
TWO theories have been floating around the Labor Party in the last few days to explain the Histadrut's extraordinary militancy. The first ascribes it to Chairman Amir Peretz's inexperience, mentality and background. The second attributes to him personal political motives, as well as broader anti-government objectives.

Peretz did something on Sunday which no labor leader of his rank in the country had ever done. When the police carried out a court order to bring in the Histadrut trade union department chief Shlomo Shani, who for days willfully disobeyed a court ruling, Peretz threw the economy into chaos with wildcat strike, blocked roads, railways, airports and sea ports - all acts which could be construed as insurrection and an attempt to terrorize the courts lest they ever again try to rule against a trade union official. Even in Labor it is admitted this could be a dangerous precedent if seized by the extreme right or the extreme hardliners.

None of Peretz's predecessors had ever done anything close to what Peretz did, certainly not since the strike-prone days of the 1960s, when Labor's own governments instituted the system of labor courts to prevent the anarchy of wildcat strikes. Peretz has taken the court 30 years back.

One theory in Labor is the Peretz is inexperienced, if not altogether the wrong man in the wrong job. He had become Histadrut chairman

ANALYSIS
SARAH HONIG



Histadrut head Amir Peretz after Haim Ramon returned to the government a year ago.

Peretz, it is privately admitted in Labor, had embarked on a dangerous path and he could potentially embarrass his own party. This would not have happened with Ramon, it is whispered, because he is a consummate give-and-take man.

In addition, his natural impetuosity may have been aided and abetted by political motivations. The Histadrut is gravely ill and this may be an attempt to revive and revitalize it. Moreover, with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu under such an all-out opposition attack, Peretz could have presumed that a hardline approach would increase the value of his stock in

Labor. He may have wanted to make himself felt. He may have thought the party would approve and treat him like its hero, or that it may have no choice but to back him. He may also, according to some hints from Labor insiders, have received the green light from on high in Labor as another facet of the campaign to delegitimize Netanyahu.

Peretz himself claims not to know what all the fuss is about. If his words are taken at face value, then he can't see anything wrong with what he had done. He cannot understand why he is accused of putting the Histadrut above the law, charging that "no one has the right to detain a trade union leader or infringe on the right to strike." Far from any contribution, Peretz complained about the general public's "annoyance and impatience with the inconvenience caused by the strikes. I understand that people are suffering, but they must realize that we are doing this for them. It's for their own good. There are no deluxe strikes which cause no pain. It's got to hurt. I am just sad to see the disappearance of solidarity and tolerance from our society."

Peretz also wondered at "how Netanyahu and Meridor depicted our actions. Their portrayal is very unfair. We are protesting against the government's economic policy but this is not a political strike. The Histadrut does not involve itself in politics."

Thousands defy strike

HERB KEINON

TINY cracks in the Histadrut's unity surfaced yesterday, as a few thousand union members defied the call to strike and showed up for work at a number of locations around the country. No incidents of violence between strikers and strike-breakers were reported.

Rafi Gidron, a member of the Kiryat Motzkin Municipality workers' committee, said the committee decided to call on its 500 members to show up for work because it was not clear if they would be paid for days missed, and by whom.

"I called the Histadrut, and asked them who will pay our workers," Gidron said. "I talked to three people and could not get a straight answer. Part of the time they said the Histadrut will pay, and part of the time they said the city will pay."

Workers at the Hod Hasharon Municipality also reportedly worked yesterday.

Gidron said he fears the larger workers' committees, in places like Bezeq and the Israel Electric Corporation will get paid by the Histadrut, while workers represented by smaller, less powerful committees, will not be so lucky.

Even though Gidron said the reasons for the strike are not "clear to anyone," he said his committee would have joined the strike if it could have been assured that the workers' salaries would not suffer.

Michel Elmaliah, in charge of the Histadrut's situation room, said the union "will deal" with the megade workers' committees. He could not elaborate.

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission reported that a "high number" of people did not honor a strike in the government sector. The commission's spokesman said that almost all the workers showed up at the treasury, the Income Tax Commission, Customs, the Civil Service Commission, the Chief Rabbinate's Office, rabbinical courts, and the Internal Security

Ministry. The spokeswoman said 80 percent of the employees showed up for work at the Education and Justice ministries. On the other end of the spectrum, the strike was almost totally honored in the Energy, Absorption, and Housing and Construction ministries. Only 25% of employees showed up for work at the Prime Minister's Office.

Itim reported that there were only a small number of strikers in the settlements, and that this was because many people there viewed the work stoppage as a "political strike."

Most of Ma'aleh Adumim's municipal workers went to work, said Aliza Aronson, head of the city's workers' committee, because a few months ago the workers switched from the Histadrut to the Likud-affiliated Histadrut Leumi.

Aronson said she does not believe yesterday's strike was justified, and that "the Histadrut is destroying the country." She said that it was possible for the Histadrut to come to a compromise with the government without shutting down much of the country.

Meanwhile, Yitzhak Rousseau, head of the Histadrut Leumi, said his organization does not support the strike, because it is not over employee-employer relations. "You don't call a strike because you have complaints about the government," he said. "For that you protest, or work through the Knesset."

(Continued from Page 1)

were postponed, with only emergency operations performed. Clinics were shut, and Magen David Adom and firefighters were also on a Shabbat schedule.

Public transportation was largely unaffected, with the Egged and Dan bus services proceeding largely as scheduled. All Dan lines in Tel Aviv were operating, with 600 striking employee drivers replaced by administrative workers.

At Ben-Gurion Airport, work went on as scheduled, with workers promising to make an extra effort to make up for delays caused by Sunday's strike. However, Civil Aviation Authority workers were on strike and did not approve special flights. Licensing Bureau offices were also affected by the strike. The Postal Authority was largely unaffected, as outside contractors were used.

Malls and places of entertainment

were crowded, as striking workers or parents forced to stay home with children affected by the closure of WIZO and Na'amai day care centers enjoyed a day off, however forced it might have been.

Most local authorities and councils were closed, except for emergency services. At government offices there was confusion, with some workers turning up for work, then stopping when union members intervened.

Bezeq was on strike, except for 500 employees working after receiving restraining orders. The banking community was also shut down, including the Bank of Israel, again except for 36 workers also under restraining orders. The Bank of Israel announced that yesterday

STRIKE

would not be considered a business day in the banking community. This means that representative rates set Sunday were good for yesterday as well.

The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange was also affected, and both Channel 1 and Educational TV were off the air until 6 p.m.

Tax and customs offices were open as usual, but did not receive the public, and the Electric Corporation was unaffected.

Most schools were in session, although university administrative workers struck, but classes were unaffected.

The Ashdod, Haifa, and Eilat ports were shut down for the fifth straight day, and Israel Railways also came to a standstill. Hundreds of trucks

were also idled by the strike at the ports, and the manager of the Hanamal Hahadash trucking cooperative, Gabi Ben-Harosh, said his company had lost millions of shekels, as had other trucking firms.

Israel Aircraft Industries and other security-related industries were shut by the strike.

The Jewish Agency, Mekorot, Amidar and Amigur, the Mivtahim and Makefet pension funds, and the Amisagim and Supergas companies were also affected by the strike. The High Court is to hear a petition by the Association of Chambers of Commerce at 5 p.m. today asking for a restraining order against the strike, charging that it is essentially political, rather than a labor dispute, and therefore does not merit the protection labor law usually gives strikers.

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Clinton, Yeltsin voted year's top stories

THE fortunes of two powerful leaders - US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin - were voted the top news stories of 1996 in an international poll of Associated Press subscribers.

The re-election of Clinton finished No. 1 and the political and physical comeback of Yeltsin was the runner-up story in an annual AP survey of news media outside the United States.

Clinton's re-election collected 491 points, and Yeltsin's re-election as president and recovery from quintuple-bypass heart surgery was a close second with 487 points.

A tumultuous year that sorely tested the Israeli-Palestinian relationship - elections, suicide

bombings and riots - finished third with 469 points.

Ballots were submitted by 139 news media subscribers in 40 countries on six continents, with editors listing their top 10 story choices. Ten points were awarded for each first place vote, nine for second and so on, down to one point per 10th place vote.

The tragedy of hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing warfare in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire finished no. 4, with 364 points. Refugees living in squalor, bodies along roadsides and orphaned children crying for parents were searing images of the calamity.

Placing fifth, with 296 points, was the worst year on record for aviation disasters, including the still

unsolved explosion of a TWA flight outside New York City that killed 230, and the worst in-flight collision in history - over India between a Saudi Boeing 747 and a smaller Kazakh plane that left 349 dead.

Other crashes included a cargo plane in Zaire killing more than 200; an airliner killing 141; the ValuJet DC-9 in the Florida Everglades that left 109 dead; a Brazilian TAM flight in Sao Paulo killing 101; and a Peruvian jetliner killing 123.

In sixth place, with 285 points, was the havoc Europe's beef industry caused by bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or "mad cow disease," and its possible link, announced by Britain, to a fatal brain ailment in humans called

Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

France's decision to end nuclear testing, and the subsequent signing by 65 countries of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was seventh in the poll, with 199 points. Last year, France's decision to resume nuclear testing after a self-imposed moratorium placed third in the AP global poll.

Other top stories in 1996:

8: The situation in Bosnia, including the country's first democratic elections, extension of NATO troops in the country and war crimes tribunal in The Hague. 195 points.

9: The unsolved terrorist bombing at the Atlanta Olympics that killed one person. 147 points.

10: Belgium's sex and politics

scandal, involving a child-sex ring that kidnapped and sexually tortured young girls, killing at least four. 140 points.

In a reflection of regional interests, European ballots tended to emphasize story choices on Bosnia, Yeltsin, cow disease and the Belgian child-sex stories.

"The mad cow scare and the Belgian pedophile case stand out as long-running stories that deeply affect the attitude and living of ordinary people," the Italian news agency AGI said in comments accompanying its ballot.

Asian editors frequently listed the treason conviction of South Korea's ex-presidents, heightened tensions between China and Taiwan, and the resignation of

Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narashima Rao.

Latin American editors cited the struggle against drug trafficking, aviation disasters, and Pope John Paul II's meeting with Fidel Castro, in addition to the Clinton, Yeltsin and Israeli-Palestinian stories.

The second 10 stories, with point totals:

11: Civil war in Chechnya ends (132 points);

12: Iraq's campaign against the Kurds in northern Iraq and the subsequent US cruise missile attack (130);

13: US space authorities announce possible evidence of microbial life on Mars (119 points);

14: Royal divorces in Britain of

Prince Charles and Diana, and Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson (107);

15: Taliban movement seizes most of Afghanistan (104);

16: Continuing tensions between North and South Korea, including the incursion into the South by a submarine. (90);

17: Gunman kills 16 schoolchildren and a teacher in Dunblane, Scotland (76);

18: Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto dismissed (74);

19: Former South Korean president Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo sentenced for treason (69);

20: Truck bomb that killed 19 US servicemen in Dharan, Saudi Arabia. (AP)

Gentle or raging, gone into the good night: The deaths of 1996

FROM European statesmen to show business stars and Nobel prize winning poets, death claimed many notable figures in 1996:

Francis Mitterrand, a leading architect of European unity who promoted France's role on the world stage, died at his presidential office near the Eiffel Tower after a long struggle with prostate cancer.

Andreas Papandreu, a Harvard-trained economist who became Greece's first Socialist prime minister and dominated Greek politics,

undergoing open heart surgery in Cape Town, South Africa. He was 70.

January 20: Baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan, a versatile jazz musician, dies in Darien, Connecticut, from complications from a knee infection. He was 68.

January 23: Actress Fatma Rushdy, considered by many to be "the Sarah Bernhardt of the East," died of a heart attack in Cairo, Egypt. She was 88; Norman MacCaig, one of Scotland's most esteemed poets of the 20th century, dies in Edinburgh, Scotland, at 85.

January 27: William Edward Hanford, an inventor of polyurethane and a pioneer in the development of synthetic foams and fibers, dies in Bethesda, Maryland. He was 87.

January 28: Nobel Prize-winning poet Joseph Brodsky, a Russian exile who became poet laureate of the United States, dies in New York City at 55.

January 31: Terence Reese, one of the finest players in the history of bridge who wrote or co-authored 83 books on the card game, dies in Hove, England, at 82.

February 2: Gene Kelly, dancer and choreographer who brought his athletic grace and Irish charm to *Singin' in the Rain*, *On the Town* and other great movie musicals of the 1940s and '50s, dies in Beverly Hills, California. He was 83.

February 26: Dr. Haing S. Ngor, a survivor of Khmer Rouge death camps who won an Oscar for his portrayal of a fellow Cambodian in *The Killing Fields*, was shot to death outside his home in Los Angeles. He was 45; Ludwig Freiherr von Hammerstein-Equord, who took part in the failed 1944 plot by German army officers to overthrow Adolf Hitler, dies in Berlin at 76.

March 1: Baroness Marie-Helene de Rothschild, a glamorous international socialite, dies at 65 in Paris. She suffered from an incurable arthritic disease.

March 3: Cardinal John Krol, a leading Roman Catholic conservative who spoke out for nuclear disarmament and helped revamp Vatican finances, dies in Philadelphia at 85; Marguerite Duras, one of France's most famed and prolific writers best known in recent years for her novel *The Lover* and the film based on it, dies in Paris. She was 81.

March 9: George Burns, cigar smoking wisecracker, dies at 100.

March 10: Movie maker Ross Hunter, whose films included the disaster saga *Airport*, dies in Los Angeles. His age has been variously reported in film publications as between 69 and 79.

March 11: Vince Edwards, who starred as a young doctor in the 1960s US TV series *Ben Casey*, dies of cancer in Los Angeles. He was 67.

Manchurian Candidate, had eerie similarities to the assassination of President Kennedy, dies in Dallas, Texas, at 81.

April 13: James "Jimmy the Gent" Burke, a mobster depicted in the movie *Goodfellas* and the suspected mastermind of the 1978 robbery at the Lufthansa cargo terminal at John F. Kennedy Airport that netted a record \$5.8 million in cash, dies of cancer in Buffalo, New York. He was 64.

April 18: Boleslavav Malkovskis, a Latvian who fled the United States when threatened with deportation to the Soviet Union for Nazi war crimes, dies in Muenster, Germany, at 92.

April 20: Christopher Robin Milne, immortalized as the young friend of Winnie the Pooh in the children's stories of his father, A.A. Milne, dies at 75.

April 23: P.L. Travers, the author who created the magical, irrepressible English nanny Mary Poppins, dies in London at 96.

April 25: Mary Electa Bidwell, the oldest-living American, dies in Hamden, Connecticut, at 114.

1930s films as *Midnight*, *Cleopatra* and the classic *It Happened One Night*, dies in Barbados. She was 92.

August 7: Ossie Clark, one of the big names of 1960s fashion design, is found stabbed to death in his London apartment. He was 54.

August 8: Sir Nevill Mott, who shared the Nobel Prize for physics in 1977 for his pioneering work on semiconductors, dies in Apsley Guise, England. He was 90; Sir Frank Whittle, the British engineer who first patented the idea of a jet engine but lost the race to put it in the air to a competitor in Nazi Germany, dies in Columbia, Maryland, of lung cancer. He was 89.

August 17: E. Digby Baltzell, a University of Pennsylvania sociologist who coined the term "WASP" (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant), dies in Boston of a heart attack. He was 80; Saleh Morsi, a popular Egyptian writer who based his novels and screenplays on cases of Egyptian espionage against Israel, dies in Alexandria, Egypt. He was 67.

August 18: Tsutakiyokomatsu Asaji, Japan's oldest geisha, who practiced the revered and often misunderstood artistic tradition for 90 years, dies in Tokyo of kidney failure. She was 102.

August 27: Songwriter and composer Yair Rosenbloom, whose *Song of Peace* was sung by prime minister Yitzhak Rabin moments before his assassination, dies of cancer in Holon. He was 52.

September 9: Bill Monroe, who combined fast-picking mandolin, banjo and guitar with a "high lonesome" singing style to create the distinctly American sound known as bluegrass, dies in Springfield, Tennessee. He was 84.

September 10: Joanne Dru, whose appearances in 40 movies included starring roles opposite John Wayne in the classic Westerns *Red River* and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, dies in Beverly Hills, California, of respiratory ailment at 74.

September 11: Hans List, Austria's leading motor pioneer and an international authority on diesel engines, dies of heart failure in Graz, Austria, at 100.

September 13: Tupac Shakur, the rapper whose raw lyrics drew on the rage of a coarse urban existence and seemed a blueprint of his own violent life, dies in Las Vegas from wounds suffered in a drive-by shooting. He was 25.

September 14: Juliet Prowse, who parlayed skillful dancing, sultry good looks and the best legs since Betty Grable into stardom in '60s movies and TV specials, dies in Holmby Hills, California, at 59. She suffered from pancreatic cancer.

September 16: McGeorge Bundy, an aide to US Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and who

dies of complications from injuries suffered in a traffic accident in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He was 71.

October 10: Magda Trocme, a pastor's wife who led a small French village's rescue of thousands of Jews from the Nazis, dies from a cerebral hemorrhage in Paris. She was 94.

October 11: William Vickrey, who used abstract theory to solve common problems, dies after winning the Nobel Prize in economics at 82. He was found slumped over the wheel of his



Francis Mitterrand

succumbed to a heart ailment.

Spiro T. Agnew, US President Richard Nixon's vice president who became a political petre by employing a colorful phraseology in criticizing anti-war protesters, liberals and the media, also died. He was the only US vice president to resign in disgrace when he pleaded no contest to a single count of income-tax evasion.

In the entertainment field, comedian George Burns, dancer Gene Kelly, jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald, actresses Greer Garson and Claudette Colbert and French film director Marcel Carne passed away.

Literary figures who died included French author Marguerite Duras, Nobel Prize-winning poet Joseph Brodsky, a Russian exile who became poet laureate of the United States, and Nobel-prize winning Greek poet Odysseus Elytis.

Robin Milne, immortalized as the young friend of Winnie the Pooh in the children's stories of his father, A.A. Milne, also passed away.

January 1: Rocket scientist Arthur Rudolph, who helped the United States win the race to the moon, dies in Hamburg, Germany. He was 89.

January 4: Ramon Vinay, a Chilean tenor who gained international fame for his interpretation of Verdi's opera *Otello*, dies in Puebla, Mexico. He was 84.

January 5: Lincoln Kirstein, who brought choreographer George Balanchine to the United States and created the New York City Ballet with the Russian master, dies in New York City. She was 88.

January 8: Francois Mitterrand, a leading architect of European unity who promoted France's role on the world stage, dies at his presidential office on the Champs de Mars of prostate cancer. He was 79.

January 13: Denise Grey, a theater and cinema star whose career spanned nine decades, dies in Paris at 99. She was a leading can-can dancer at the famous Parisian cabaret the Folies Bergeres.

January 15: Abdel Wahab Mohamed, an Egyptian poet who wrote love songs for many of the Arab world's most famous singers, dies of heart failure in Cairo, Egypt. He was 65; King Moshoeshe II, a resilient leader of Lesotho who twice regained his throne after being deposed, dies near Maseru, Lesotho, in a car accident. He was 57.

January 20: Harold Wolpe, an anti-apartheid lawyer who was the target of one of white-led South Africa's biggest manhunts, dies after



Ella Fitzgerald

April 26: American screenwriter Stirling Silliphant, who won an Oscar for the 1967 movie *In the Heat of the Night* and its depiction of racism in the American South, dies of cancer in Bangkok, Thailand. He was 78.

May 2: Emile Habibi, a founder of Israel's communist party and longtime Knesset whose chronicle of the predicaments of Israel's Arab citizens earned him Israel's top literary award, dies of pancreatic cancer in Nazareth. He was 73.

May 5: Ai Qing, one of modern China's most famous poets, dies in Beijing at 86.

May 8: Luis Miguel Domingua, a bullfighter whose intense rivalry with his brother-in-law was chronicled by Ernest Hemingway, dies near San Roque, Spain, of a stroke. He was 69.

May 17: American rhythm and blues musician Johnny "Guitar" Watson dies of a heart attack while performing at a blues club outside Tokyo. He was 61.

May 18: Djordje Djukic, the Bosnian Serb general charged with war crimes but freed by an international tribunal because of his failing health, dies in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, of pancreatic cancer at 62.

May 25: Barney Wilen, the French pioneer of 1960s "free jazz" and a sizzling saxophonist, dies in Paris at 59.

May 30: Cardinal Leon-Etienne Duval, a Roman Catholic archbishop who championed Algeria's right to independence, dies in Algiers, Algeria, at 92.

May 31: Timothy Leary, the Harvard professor turned guru of LSD who encouraged the '60s generation to "turn on, tune in, drop out," dies of cancer in Beverly Hills, California. He was 75.

June 10: Jo Van Fleet, the Academy Award-winning actress who made a career playing mothers on stage and in such films as *East of Eden* and *Cool Hand Luke*, dies in New York. She was believed to be 81.

June 15: Ella Fitzgerald, the world's "first lady of song," dies in Beverly Hills, California, at 78. She was bedridden with complications of diabetes.

June 23: Andreas Papandreu, a Harvard-trained economist who became Greece's first Socialist prime minister and dominated Greek politics in the 1980s, dies in Ekali, Greece, from heart failure. He was 77.

June 27: Hollywood producer Albert R. "Cubby" Broccoli, who produced 17 James Bond movies, dies in Beverly Hills, California, at 87. He had undergone heart bypass surgery a year ago.

July 1: Margaux Hemingway, Ernest Hemingway's granddaughter and model was found dead in Santa Monica, California. She was 41.

July 17: Former militia chief Paul Touvier, the only Frenchman convicted of World War II crimes against humanity, dies at Fresnes prison in France. He was 81.

July 22: Peter Ludwig, a German who was one of the world's foremost art collectors, dies of a ruptured colon in Aachen, Germany, at 71.

July 23: Jessica Mitford, whose book *The American Way of Death* was hailed as a blistering indictment of the funeral industry, dies of lung cancer in Oakland, California. She was 78.

July 30: Claudette Colbert, whose trademark bangs and radiant smile graced such beloved

car in Harrison, New York.

October 12: British muralist Stefan Knapp, who created what is believed to be the largest mural in the world, dies of a heart attack in Guildford, England, at 75. His 200-by-50-foot (61-by-15-meter) mural is still mounted on the front wall of the former Alexander's Department Store, in Paramus, New Jersey.

October 17: Berthold Goldschmidt, whose *The Magnificent Cuckold* was the last opera by a Jewish composer to premiere in Germany before Nazis took power, dies in London at 93.

October 23: Dr. Kurt Freund, whose research into human sexuality was considered among the most groundbreaking of the century, dies in Toronto at 82. Freund, who was suffering from lung cancer, committed suicide.

October 31: Marcel Carne, one of France's greatest directors who braved the Nazi occupation to make *The Children of Paradise* and *Night Visitors*, dies at a hospital in the Paris suburb of Clamart. He was 90.

November 3: Jean-Bedel Bokassa, one of Africa's most ruthless dictators accused of killing and eating those who dared criticize his regime, dies of a heart attack in Bangui, Central African Republic.

November 14: Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the senior Roman Catholic prelate in the United States, dies in Chicago at 68.

November 15: Alger Hiss, the public servant who fell from grace in a Communist spy scandal that propelled Richard Nixon to higher office, dies in New York at 92.

November 21: Pakistani physicist and Nobel prizewinner Abdus Salam dies in Oxford, England. He was 70.

November 24: Sorley Maclean, an acclaimed poet who found his voice in Scottish Gaelic, dies in Inverness, Scotland, at age 85.

November 28: Tiny Tim, the scraggly haired singer with the falsetto warble and ukulele who crooned *Tiptoe Through the Tulips* into a 1960s counter-culture classic, dies in Minneapolis after apparent cardiac arrest. He was 64.

December 8: Marin Sorescu, a revered poet and former Romanian minister of culture, dies in Bucharest, Romania, after a heart attack. He was 60.

December 9: Mary Leakey, half of the husband-and-wife team whose fossil discoveries in East Africa brought the world closer to understanding the origins of man, dies in Kenya at 83. (AP)



Claudette Colbert

George Burns



March 13: Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski, an Academy Award nominee best known for his film trilogy *Blue, White and Red*, dies of a heart attack in Warsaw, Poland. He was 54.

March 17: French filmmaker Rene Clement, best-known for his action-packed account of the liberation of Paris in *Is Paris Burning?*, dies in Monaco at 82.

March 18: Odysseus Elytis, a Nobel Prize-winning Greek poet, dies in Athens, Greece, at 84.

March 20: Claude Bourdet, a Resistance hero who survived a Nazi death camp to become an outspoken leftist journalist criticizing racism and French colonial policies, dies in Paris at 86.

March 26: David Packard, a patriarch of American business and co-founder of Silicon Valley electronics pioneer Hewlett-Packard Co., dies of pneumonia in Stanford, California, at 83; Edmund Muskie, the former US Secretary of State, dies of heart failure in Washington at 81.

April 6: Greer Garson, the gallant leading lady whose portrayal of a courageous British housewife in *Mrs. Miniver* rallied Americans to support Britain during World War II, dies in Dallas, Texas, of heart failure. She was 92.

April 8: Ben Johnson, a champion rodeo performer who appeared in numerous Westerns and won a best supporting actor Oscar for *The Last Picture Show*, dies of an apparent heart attack near Phoenix, Arizona. He was 77.

April 9: Best-selling author Richard Condon, whose novel of brainwashing and murder, *The*

Andreas Papandreu



played a key role in the Cuban missile crisis, the Bay of Pigs invasion and the buildup in Vietnam, dies of a heart attack in Boston at 77.

September 17: Spiro T. Agnew, Richard Nixon's vice president, who became the only US vice president to resign in disgrace, dies of undiagnosed leukemia in Berlin, Maryland, at 77.

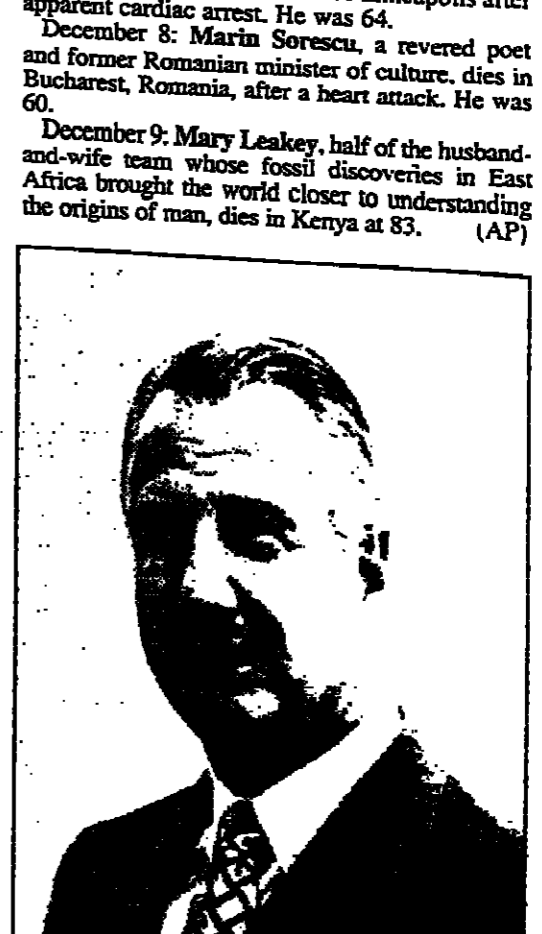
September 20: Max Mannes, a World War II resistance fighter who wrote three popular books about his daring raids against Nazi occupation forces in Norway, dies in Baerum, Norway at 81; Paul Erdos, one of this century's leading mathematicians, dies of a heart attack in Warsaw, Poland, while attending an international conference of mathematicians. The Hungarian-American was 83.

September 21: Sabine Zlatin, who founded a home that helped scores of Jewish children escape the Nazis during World War II, dies in Paris at 89.

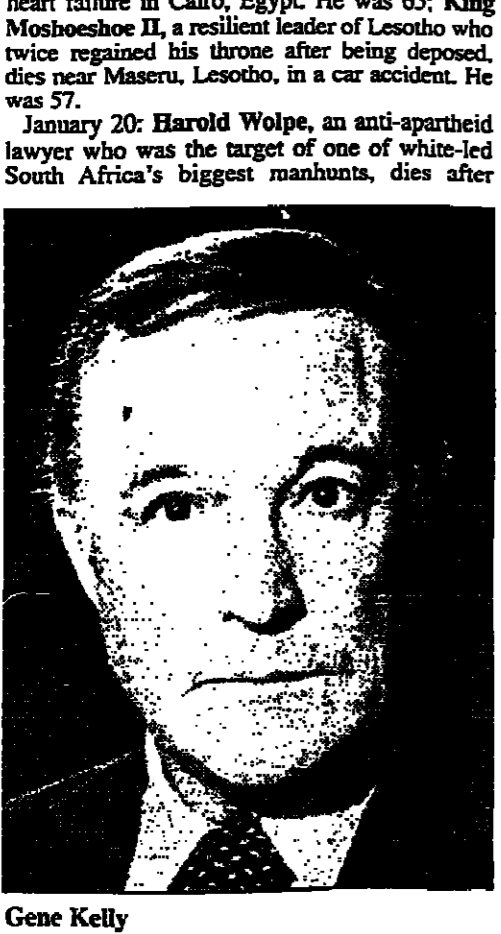
September 22: Dorothy Lamour, the sarong-wearing, straight-faced foil to Bob Hope and Bing Crosby as they traveled the world in their "Road" pictures, such as *The Road to Singapore*, died in Los Angeles at 81; Ludmilla Chiriaeff, founder of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and the winner of numerous awards for contributions to Canadian dance, dies in Montreal, Canada. She was 72.

September 24: Pavel Sudoplatov, the Soviet spy master who stole the secret of the atomic bomb and plotted the assassination of Leon Brezhnev, dies in Moscow after suffering a stroke. He was 89.

October 5: Computer wizard Seymour Cray, who pioneered the use of transistors in comput-



Spiro Agnew



Gene Kelly

Police say more than 300 dead in India train blast

AT least 300 people were believed to have been killed yesterday when a powerful bomb ripped through several carriages of a packed train in India's northeastern state of Assam, police said.

Local railway officials said 35 or 40 bodies had so far been recovered by emergency workers struggling through the mangled wreckage but said the death toll was expected to be much higher.

If the toll of 300 or more is confirmed, it would make the attack the second most devastating guerrilla action on record. In June 1985, Sikh extremists were blamed for a bomb on an Air India Boeing 747 which crashed into the sea off Ireland, killing 329 people.

In December 1988, 270 died when a bomb destroyed a Pan American Boeing 747 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency quoted officials as saying the death toll was at least 300.

A senior police official told Reuters in Assam's biggest city of Guwahati that suspected separatist Bodo militants had used a remote-controlled device packed with explosives to blow up the Delhi-bound Brahmaputra Mail.

BISWAJYOTI DAS
GUWAHATI, India

Hundreds of people were travelling ahead of the New Year holiday on the express train, named after the sacred river that flows through the northeast.

"Bodo guerrillas blew up three coaches of a passenger train killing at least 300 people at Sensapani railway station," the police official told Reuters.

There was no immediate word on how many were injured.

Sensapani is 200 km west of Guwahati, hub of the oil-producing and tea-rich state, and rescuers struggled to reach the remote area in pitch darkness.

Railway officials said no rescue team could reach the site until about midnight local time.

Describing the explosion, the police official said: "They used RDX (plastic explosives) and a remote-controlled device."

RDX became widely known in India after it was used in a series of bomb blasts that killed 260 people in Bombay in March, 1993.

Police in the town of Kokrajhar said local

residents had heard two loud explosions and suggested the attack may have involved two bombs.

The train had left Kokrajhar for Delhi around 7 p.m. yesterday.

The attack came a day after tribal Bodo guerrillas blew up a road bridge that formed the main link between India's northeast regions and the rest of the country, injuring seven people.

Activists representing Bodo tribesmen living north of the Brahmaputra river want a homeland within India in the state of Assam, but an extremist fringe, the Bodoland Army, has been fighting for a separate nation since 1989.

"This is the worst incident of separatist violence in Assam this year," the police official said. Most of the passengers were believed to be holiday-makers heading for Delhi to celebrate the New Year.

Police said none of the several guerrilla groups operating in Assam had claimed responsibility for the blast.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in ethnic and separatist violence in Assam during the last three years.

Peru expects peaceful end to hostage crisis

PERUVIAN Prime Minister Alberto Pandolfi said yesterday he expected the siege at the Japanese ambassador's residence to end with all 83 remaining hostages released unharmed by their Marxist captors.

"We are sure that the continuing sound handling of the situation will allow a solution that protects the physical well-being and lives of all of the hostages," the head of the cabinet said in a speech.

"The government is working permanently with prudence and dedication for the prompt release" of the hostages, he added, without giving more details.

Although there has been no public word for nine days from President Alberto Fujimori - who keeps the final decision-making for himself - Pandolfi's words echoed the new mood of optimism from the weekend.

Government negotiator Education Minister Domingo Palermo met guerrilla leader Nestor Cerpa Carolini Saturday in the first face-to-face contact between the two sides since the crisis began on December 17.

Their meeting was followed by the release of 20 more hostages by rebels of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), prompting hopes the rest would follow quickly.

But by yesterday afternoon, there was no new move from the roughly 20 rebels. Heavily armed with grenades and automatic rifles, they have booby-trapped and mined the residence in Lima's fashionable San Isidro district.

The international MRTA spokesman condemned a "solidarity" bomb attack at the Peruvian embassy in Athens by the Guerrilla Fighting Group, another militant leftist organization.

"We reject this sort of display of solidarity because it does not con-

ANDREW CAWTHORNE
LIMA

tribute to the solution of a crisis," Isaac Velazco told Reuters in a telephone interview from Hamburg, Germany.

Earlier yesterday, hostages trapped at the besieged ambassador's home sent letters to families - the first correspondence allowed out in four days.

Relatives of the captives, suffering their 13th day under rebel guns, went to Red Cross headquarters in Lima to pick up scores of messages scrawled on special forms provided by the organization. Red Cross officials also took food and supplies to the residence.

The family of Jesuit priest Juan Julio Wicht, who is among the captives, released a letter he wrote over Christmas.

The priest jovially boasted that he was unbeaten at chess after eight games with Japanese and Peruvian diplomats.

"I am well and I am doing a lot of good for everyone here in such

difficult circumstances," wrote Wicht, who opted to stay in the residence despite being offered freedom. He has held various masses for the captives.

"I am here on a mission and I feel your support and prayers... I am simply doing what any of you or any Jesuit would do, but better than I."

He said tensions were rising and nights spent on the floor of the house were long and hot. But "we hostages maintain our unity and spirits, we pray together and we sing although we do not have the words... God is helping us."

The remaining hostages include President Alberto Fujimori's brother Pedro, top Peruvian police and government officials and about 20 Japanese businessmen.

As New Year approached, police and civil leaders called on Peruvians to tone down celebrations in sympathy with the hostages, and to refrain from using fireworks - particularly around the residence - so as not to alarm the rebels.

Bomb explodes at Peru Embassy in Athens

ATHENS, Greece (AP) - A powerful bomb explosion rocked the entrance to the Peruvian embassy in central Athens yesterday, injuring a female passerby, police said.

They said the young woman suffered mild cuts from flying pieces of glass that showered the entrance of the building housing the Peruvian embassy.

Sky television, a private network, said an anonymous caller telephoned the station to say the attack was waged in support of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

The Marxist organization has been holding 83 captives at the Japanese embassy residence in Peru for the past 13 days.

Greek police sped to the site of the explosion and sealed off streets surrounding the Peruvian embassy located on the second floor of an apartment block on Queen Sophia Avenue.

Officials said the explosion was triggered by a make-shift bomb that damaged a door and shattered windows.

Army swears unity on 41st day of Belgrade marches

BELGRADE (Reuters) - The Yugoslav army denied yesterday that it was split over support for Serbian president in his dispute with the opposition as demonstrators hit the streets of Belgrade for the 41st day.

Buoyed by an apparent statement of support from dissident army officers, the demonstrators renewed their demands that Milosevic recognize opposition wins in November's local elections.

An unsigned and unauthenticated letter, read out before 50,000 opposition supporters Sunday, warned Milosevic its authors, which apparently included men of the elite 63rd Paratroop Brigade, would refuse to fire on demonstrators if ordered to do so.

The letter also warned the opposition Zajedno (Together) coalition that it too would be toppled in its turn if it became autocratic in power.

But an official army statement later stressed its unity, though it made no pledge of loyalty to Milosevic who has struggled for six weeks to contain the protests that have paralyzed Belgrade for more than six hours every day.

The protest wave, made despite police moves to drive demonstrators off the main streets, is the most sustained popular push for democratization in 50 years of leftist one-party rule in Serbia-led Yugoslavia.

Five thousand university students tried to march across the Sava river bridge yesterday but were blocked by police and forced to retreat into a pedestrian mall.

Later, tens of thousands of people backing Zajedno massed in Republic Square with riot police packing adjacent streets to prevent protesters swarming into traffic zones.

Dejan Bulatovic, a Zajedno activist who had been beaten while in police custody, appeared at the rally after he was released yesterday having served 25 days in jail for carrying an effigy of Milosevic in prison garb.

"They are wrong if they think we have achieved nothing in these 41 days," one of Zajedno's leaders Zoran Djindjic told the crowd. "We began by chasing a fox which stole our votes and ended up driving a dinosaur out of its lair."

With the streets sealed off by the authorities, Zajedno also confined its now traditional march to the pedestrian mall, walking in circles and jearing at the cordons of riot police.

Up to a quarter of a million people have rallied daily in Serbia against Milosevic's annulment of November 17 municipal elections in 14 cities, including Belgrade, won by Zajedno.

Post-war Guatemala must bury hatreds

GUATEMALA CITY (Reuters) - Guatemala began its post-war era yesterday facing the enormous challenge of burying a history of fratricidal hatred and overcoming deep skepticism about its future after 36 years of guerrilla war.

"The problem with Guatemala is that civil war has become almost institutionalized," a western diplomat said.

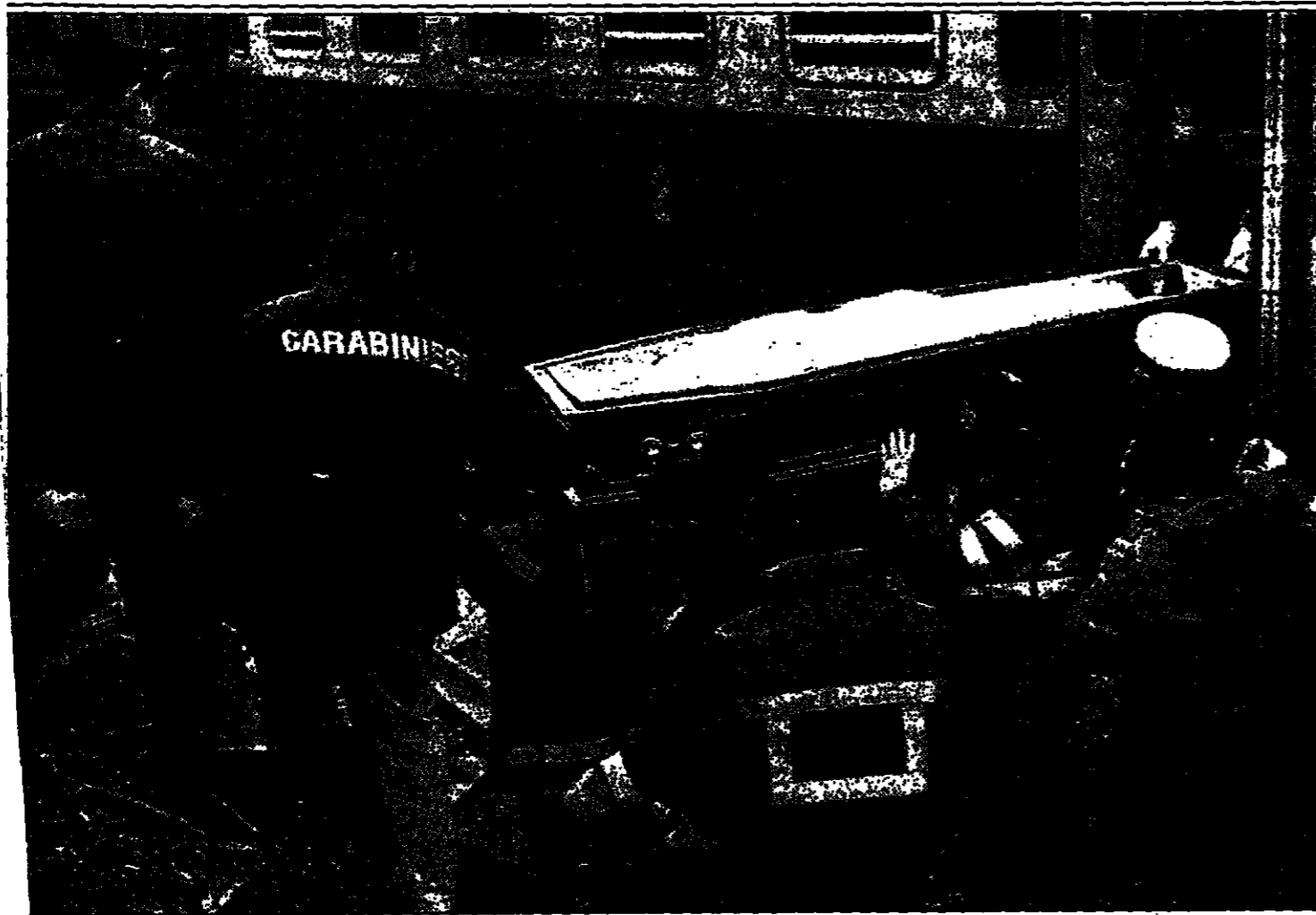
Guatemalans turned out in the tens of thousands Sunday to wit-

ness the end of one of Latin America's most enduring and brutal conflicts in which 100,000 people died and some 40,000 "disappeared" in counter-insurgency sweeps.

The scale of the devastation, mostly suffered during the years of military dictatorship in the 1960s to 1980s, meant the celebration was more reflective than euphoric, and many - particularly on the left - were openly sceptical.

Before both sides effectively halted military operations last March, conflict had long been pocketed in the remote highlands, home mostly to Indians that make up a downtrodden majority in the Central American country.

Ideological frictions still run deep. "In terms of the political polarizations that have been created over the past 36 years, they are wounds which will take a long time to heal," the diplomat said.



body is taken from the wreckage after two people were killed and 17 injured when a single locomotive collided with a passenger train in northern Italy yesterday.

Security Council fears Iraq may be hiding Russian missile parts

NITED NATIONS (AP) - Fearing Iraq may have hidden missile engines and parts that could be used to build prohibited weapons, the security council condemned Iraq yesterday for not cooperating with UN inspectors.

Iraq refused the inspectors' request, earlier this month, to take about 130 Russian-made missiles to a US lab and determine whether Iraq removed their engines and key parts, substituting lower-grade Iraqi ones.

"Maybe they are very afraid of this investigation," said Rolf Ekeus, who chairs the inspection team. "How many significant components have been removed from the actual missiles before they were destroyed?"

Ekeus and other inspectors believe Iraq may have put Russian engines and parts - which are better than ones Iraq has technology to build - into Iraqi-made missiles, thereby making them more powerful and accurate.

"Why would you keep them unless you want-

ed to stick them with something that could be made indigenously?" said Ewen Buchanan, an aide to Ekeus on the inspection team, known as the UN Special Commission on Iraq, or Unscocm.

Ekeus said Iraqi officials in one case even admitted that Iraq had replaced a Russian engine with an Iraqi one.

Unscocm officials want to inspect the missiles at the US Army Missile Command in Huntsville, Alabama, which they said is the best facility in the world for intricate missile testing.

Iraqi UN ambassador Nizar Hamdoun said Iraq was cooperating with the commission but does not want the missiles taken to the US, rather than Russia, for inspection.

"If it is to be taken elsewhere to be investigated, it should be taken to the country of origin," he said, adding that he hoped the disagreement would be resolved "in the coming weeks."

Under terms of UN resolutions ending the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq is to get rid of all weapons of mass destruction, including missiles that can travel more than 150 km.

Deputy US ambassador Edward Gnehm yesterday expressed pleasure at a statement the Security Council adopted that "deplores the refusal by Iraq" to allow inspectors to remove the missiles.

"What we're seeing here in this particular episode is the continuation of Iraq to obstruct through manipulation and deception the activities of Unscocm," he said.

Ekeus on December 18 reported that Iraq not only has missiles, but also rocket launchers, fuel and a command system to "make a missile force of significance" that could threaten its neighbors.

During the Gulf War, Iraq fired missiles at Israel, killing two people, and at Saudi Arabia, killing 28 US soldiers.

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Trading places

YESTERDAY'S no-confidence motion by the right-wing Moleket party marked a watershed in Israeli politics and in the short history of the Netanyahu government. Just as Likud prime minister Menachem Begin relied on Labor votes to pass the Camp David Accords, a government of the Right is again relying on the Left to support its policies regarding the peace process.

Labor, Meretz, and the Arab parties resisted the temptation to try and topple the current government by abstaining on Moleket's motion of no confidence in the prime minister. It could have been otherwise. Labor MK Dalia Itzik, for example, called on her party to vote with Moleket in the hope that Labor could help bring about new elections. It was also not long ago that Binyamin Netanyahu himself, as opposition leader, voted with the Arab parties on a no-confidence motion concerning building in Jerusalem, in the end forcing the Labor government to abandon its plans.

The opposition parties, particularly Labor and Meretz, are to be commended for choosing the more principled course, rather than taking political advantage of the government's crisis on the Right.

In fact, the coalition was never in any real danger, because if the parties of the Left had tried to take advantage of the situation, the National Religious Party, which absented itself, would have voted for the government. From an ideological standpoint, however, there is no doubt that the government's imminent agreement on Hebron has more support from the opposition than from the coalition.

In the Knesset, some of the most bitter opposition to the government came from Likud and NRP MKs who are concerned about the direction in which Netanyahu has been leading the nation. They accused the government of producing an agreement that was no better for the Jews of Hebron than that negotiated by the previous government, of having no red lines; of leading Israel towards disaster. In fact, they sounded much like Netanyahu did while in the opposition: "Four ministers even absented themselves from the Knesset plenum, preferring not to place a vote of confidence in the government in which they are members."

The question now is whether the current debate over Hebron is an exception, or whether it marks a structural realignment which will typify the peace process battles ahead. Leaders across the spectrum are asking: Is Netanyahu a hawk in rhetoric and a dove in actions?

NRP MK Shaul Yahalom, for example, pointed out that despite all the talk about settlements, nothing has happened on the ground, not even the expansion of existing settlements which occurred under the previous government. He

pointed out that the government — which placed the solidifying of Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem at the centerpiece of its election campaign — has even hinted that it may not go ahead with building within Jerusalem itself.

During that campaign, the Moleket party slogan was "Only Moleket is on the Right." At the time, when the Likud was being portrayed as an anathema to the peace process, the slogan seemed farfetched.

In fact, the Moleket slogan turned out to be more prescient than anyone would have guessed. Far from killing the Oslo process, the Netanyahu government has reinforced it by entwining the fate of the mainstream Right inextricably with the peace process.

Labor leader Shimon Peres boasted in yesterday's Knesset debate that only Labor could have negotiated the continued IDF presence in the Machpela Cave, the tomb of the Patriarchs. Perhaps the question is whether the Peres government, given the opposition of the Right even to the current government, could have implemented its own agreement.

Former prime ministers Rabin and Peres were willing to forge ahead on controversial agreements with the narrowest of Knesset majorities. Netanyahu claimed that his election would change that approach, but the pendulum has swung so far in the other direction that he is losing the support of much of his own coalition.

The question coalition members are now asking out loud in the Knesset is whether — beyond rhetoric — Netanyahu is doing anything differently than what Peres would have done.

It is too soon to say, with the details and side agreements still unknown, whether Netanyahu has found a way to mold the Hebron agreement in his own image. In any case, the test of Hebron may have been an unfair one, given that he had to work within a signed agreement that he inherited. From now on, Oslo becomes more open to interpretation.

The prime minister himself has defined the basic standard upon which to measure his future success: the concept of reciprocity. "Both Israel and the Palestinians have lists of outstanding items within the Oslo framework that are supposed to be implemented before embarking on permanent status negotiations. Will Israel fulfill the Palestinian wish list unilaterally, or will the Palestinians have to improve their compliance with Oslo in return?"

If Netanyahu succeeds in negotiating real reciprocity concerning future steps, he will succeed in walking the fine line between remaining true to Oslo and to the voters who elected him. If not, he may find that the broad consensus that Israelis want — and he sincerely wishes to provide — will elude him.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FIRST AID IN ISRAEL

Sir, — The Kendrick Extrication Device (KED) pictured in your issue of December 18 is a useful and practically foolproof aid to ambulance personnel and search-and-rescue teams in extracting seated or trapped accident victims with suspected spinal injuries. Its most helpful features are three pairs of wide, color-coded straps (red, yellow and green) which are useful in preventing mistakes during cramped or high-pressured situations, and long Velcro strips to simplify immobilization of the patient's head.

From the picture, however, it seems the device is not entirely foolproof enough. The photo shows the MDA volunteer "demonstrating" the device as incorrectly as can be imagined. The device has been placed backwards behind the patient, thus placing the straps and Velcro attachments inside the device rather than outside where they can actually be of some use; the arms

of the patient are being restrained within the device, when the arm holes are actually one of the KED's best features, allowing the patient to help himself during an extrication when, for example, the risk of his slamming face-first into rock walls or other hazards is high; and manual cervical control of the patient has been abandoned before the KED has been fitted to the patient (if there were damage to cervical vertebrae, the pink device in the photo might not, by itself, be protection enough.)

I would like to say that I am surprised at the ineptitude shown in this photo; sadly, after having witnessed MDA in action three times so far, I have to admit that I'm not. I have seen a patient who had been thrown from a vehicle, walked to an ambulance, and there strapped into a scoop-stretcher; I have seen an ALS vehicle stay on the scene of a traumatic car wreck with its patient for almost 25 minutes; and I seen

an elderly woman with a tolerable, undisplaced fracture handled so carelessly as to painfully displace it, visibly shortening and twisting her leg. In all of these instances, I was one of the first on the scene; and in all of them, I cursed myself for ever letting MDA volunteers near them.

I have seen donated MDA ambulances all over this country, and I applaud the donors for their gifts. But I would like to suggest that an ambulance with inadequately trained personnel is no better than a taxi; and that future donor moneys would be better spent by giving the well-intentioned but under-trained MDA volunteers the skills they need, rather than buying them new equipment that they don't even know how to use. After all, an ambulance is only as good as the people in it.

SUSAN BLATT
Jerusalem.

"ATID"

Sir, — On Wednesday, Atid, the new international partnership of three pluralistic, apolitical Zionist youth movements, holds its founding convention at Moshav Shoshan. This is the first formal assembly of the Israeli Tsorefim (Scouts); the American Young Judeans; and the British Federation of Zionist Youth.

The three-day convention program emphasizes Israel-Diaspora relations and the role of Zionist youth movements in creating new bonds.

The Jewish people appear to be more and more polarized. The centrality of Israel in the world of the Diaspora is waning. Our young people are subject to considerable criticism, for what they do and for what they don't do. At this time, the

founding of Atid is a significant statement; it declares that young Jewish men and women are willing, even eager, to seek out and enhance that which unites us, rather than focus on that which divides.

Their commitment to the concept of a Jewish people and their determination to realize that idea is reflected in their daily lives. They are serious students, supplementing their secular education with Jewish studies and youth-movement activities. Many do community service — with the elderly, the handicapped, and immigrants; staffing food banks, promoting literacy, and tutoring deprived children. They care —

about their society, about the Jewish world, about "doing for others."

I hope Atid will serve as a model for other programs promoting cooperation and understanding. We need to talk to each other and to listen; to discuss, argue and debate; but most of all to relate and interact. We desperately need partnerships of this kind. We need to follow the Atid example. These youth-movement members deserve our respect, admiration, encouragement and support.

MARLENE EDITH POST
National and International
President,
Hadassah
Jerusalem.

CRUDE HEADLINE

The article with a crudely sarcastic headline, which read: "Brotherly love, Hassidic style."

This is the type of sophomoric unprofessionalism which typifies much of Israel's Hebrew-language press. If the Post allows its writers

to ape the uglier aspects of Israeli journalism, there will be little reason for bilingual Israelis to read the Post at all.

M. HALLER
Jerusalem.



Yosef Goell

Super-rich vs. workers

YOSEF GOELL

LIKE an earthquake, Sunday's economy-wide strike, spearheaded by the powerful constituent trade unions of the Histadrut, came as a shock to an unprepared government and a shocked public.

But as with earthquakes, the buildup of hidden tensions which finally burst out can be measured, at times even predicted.

Blame for the irresponsibility that led to the painful shut-downs of large parts of the public economy on Sunday afternoon and yesterday must be shared between the heads of the Histadrut and the government.

Earlier this month the Histadrut declared its intention to call a general strike after the mandatory two-week cooling-off period; so it should have been obvious that Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz was merely awaiting a suitable pretext.

This was obligingly provided by a stumblefooted government which ordered the unprecedented arrest of a strike leader, Shlomo Shani, the hitherto anonymous head of the Histadrut's Trade Union Division.

Jailing a union leader cannot be anything but a casus belli — all the more so a woefully weakened Histadrut whose leadership is frantically intent on proving that it has not vanished as a potent economic force to be reckoned with by government and employers.

The Histadrut's unprecedented budgetary penalty has compelled Peretz immediately to fire a large number of local trade union council heads and their staffs. A general strike is a way to distract attention from that traumatic in-house axing.

Peretz is also trying to assert his role as a radical labor leader in order to assert his hegemony on the independent and powerful constituent unions that provided the muscle behind the strike and have shown in the past that they are fully capable of closing the economy down, should they so

decide.

IRONICALLY, the overnight escalation of the strike at Haifa Chemicals into an economy-wide confrontation reflects the radicalization that has accompanied the eroding of the Histadrut.

When the Histadrut was Israel's gigantic conglomerate of trade unions, industries and social services, its leaders behaved much more responsibly because they

If Netanyahu and Meridor had thought about it they might not have been so surprised by this week's general strike

had to juggle those diverse interests. Now, divested of these multiple roles, they feel constrained to behave which more radically in

fighting for the narrower bread-and-butter economic interests of their worker members.

The immediate and widespread participation in the strike is evidence that it was not merely the whim of a formerly responsible labor leadership gone wild.

Prime Minister Netanyahu and Finance Minister Meridor may have been honest in expressing their perplexity over the cause of the strike, but they were also more than a little disingenuous.

What lies behind the strike is a very real perception of the Netanyahu government's basic hostility to workers' interests.

Netanyahu makes frequent references to his vision of a Thatcherite future for Israel, and has not disguised his intention to privatize large parts of the publicly owned economy. The more well-to-do workers correctly perceive these as direly threatening

their interests. Privatization is at times a real improvement over public ownership; but commitment to privatization as an ideology always leads to higher unemployment and to the pauperization of large parts of the well-established work force.

The growing income gap in this country has not been merely between those at the top and those at the bottom; the chasm between the very rich and the upper-middle-income earners has also grown unprecedentedly.

The government's ideological biases were given expression this week in the denouement of the budget debate in the Knesset Finance Committee.

When it was forced to give in to demands that it revoke budget proposals that would have hit primarily at the poor, the Treasury pulled a fast one by, in effect, raising income taxes on middle-level earnings and abolishing tax easements for working women.

A government that was not ideologically committed to the super-rich at the expense of everyone else would have made up its revenue shortfall by slashing the NIS 9b. in National Insurance easements to employers and raising marginal tax rates at the top. But that was unthinkable for Netanyahu and Meridor.

A government with such economic biases which refuses to negotiate with workers' representatives on an honest basis should not be surprised to find itself confronted by all the striking force those workers can muster. Its anti-social intentions need nipping in the bud before they get a chance to mature.

One can only hope that in this confrontation the Histadrut learns to focus its strength on the government while refraining from hitting at the broader public, thus weakening its own positions.

The writer comments on public affairs.

Taking a moral stand

P. DAVID HORNIK

A short while ago in Britain, two Palestinian terrorists got 20-year sentences for bombing attacks — in which no one got killed — on Israeli and Jewish targets there. The judge, expressing moral disgust, recommended that the two terrorists be expelled from Britain after serving their sentences.

A short while ago in Israel, two Palestinian terrorists killed two members of an Israeli family — and got away with it. They fled to the safety of Ramallah, controlled by the Palestinian Authority, were apprehended and given "prison sentences" that everyone knows are a joke.

Our present government was elected largely because Israelis felt Jewish life had become cheap in Israel. But it now seems that principle is part of the "irreversible" legacy inherited from the previous government.

When they were in the opposition, Binyamin Netanyahu and other critics of the Oslo accords complained that the Rabin-Peres government had no real red lines.

What would have to happen, they asked, for that government really to take Yasser Arafat to task, to apply the brakes to the "process"?

Now we know something about this government's "red lines." We know it does not draw the line at letting Palestinians get away with murder.

Not that we should worry: Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi will be taking the tough measure of writing to the PA to request the murderers' extradition, continuing a game former justice minister David Liba'i excelled in.

And in case anyone had any

It's good to know that there is still a country where Jews can walk in dignity

their statement, voting overwhelmingly for Netanyahu and for right-wing, religious, or centrist parties.

But now it's still open season on Israelis — and there's nowhere left to go.

The Likud, Tsomet and the National Religious Party are already in the government. No one takes to the streets to protest being murderable, and we can't exactly threaten to throw the rascals out for a right-wing alternative in 2000.

The left-wing opposition? It's sunk to a level of moral and intellectual squalor that sullies the memory of the great Labor Zionist achievements of the past.

Yes, some Labor MKs were nice enough to visit the bereaved Tzur family. But criticize Arafat? Demand that he honor agreements? Suggest that perhaps some

aspects of the "process" aren't working so well? Inconceivable.

The Left has become incapable of thinking of Arabs as enemies; its only real enemies are other Israelis.

Even Ehud Barak can, at most, manage to give Arafat a light verbal tap on the wrist, all the while joining in the relentless, automatic exhortation of Netanyahu.

THE MARCH of madness and suicide goes on.

For the US and Israel the transcendent goal — which justifies abandoning the most basic moral principles — is to create an anti-US, anti-Israel terrorist state along our contracting borders.

Three years into this "process" we are not further from war, but closer to it. Syria is no less militant; Egypt and the Palestinians are more militant; Israel is weakened, demoralized, divided.

The main hope now is not that there will be peace, but that Arab states will not join in the Israel-PA war that is certain to break out.

Such destabilization is not in American interests, and it certainly is not in Israel's.

But the show must go on, a sort of secular religion, immune to invalidation even, seemingly, in the eyes of its latest Netanyahu government devotees.

In this bleak situation it's good to know that there is still a country where Jews can walk in dignity, secure in the knowledge that any attempt on their lives will be treated as a serious crime, and the perpetrators punished. The irony is it's Britain.

The author is a writer and translator living in Jerusalem.

Ugly image

ALEXANDER ZVIELLI

YESTERDAY the group of laid-off Dimona textile workers who have been squatting in a factory warehouse for the past six months started a fire to draw attention to their desperation and distress. One person narrowly escaped severe injury. All of us should be warned.

While the government and the Histadrut waste billions of shekels fighting over politics and prestige, causing the economy severe harm, the needs of the weakest strata of the population — those in places like Dimona and Yeroham — go ignored.

Yet we ignore them at our peril. These people maintain our borders; they are the real backbone of the country. We need towns in the Negev and the Arava to be strong and prosperous; Israel consists of more than Tel Aviv and Haifa.

But what foreign company will invest in a country plagued by labor strife, one in which the labor federation all but declares that it owns all industry?

If the government and the Histadrut cannot work together in places like Dimona — if all that matters is the seven big trade unions — then what we are seeing

The ongoing tragedy of the Dimona textile workers reflects a social sickness

in Dimona today we will be witnessing in Tel Aviv and Haifa tomorrow.

The current conflict will lead to large-scale joblessness, which will eventually affect the strong unions too.

And in a country like Israel, unemployment is more dangerous than any external threat.

WHICH brings us back to those desperate people in Dimona.

Veteran workers who had loyally served Dimona Textile for many years suddenly found themselves laid off as a result of "financial problems." Alternative employment possibilities were virtually non-existent.

TV's Channel 1 recently highlighted the plight of these 280 families in heart-wringing fashion, presenting a picture of mass tragedy.

The fired workers were clearly in shock; we saw them helplessly squatting on the factory floor and walking sadly among rusting machinery.

Redundancy in an unprofitable local textile industry might seem imperative. But is it? And must the local textile industry remain unprofitable?

With reports of Israeli industry investing \$800m. abroad in 1996 and new textile plants opening in Jordan, one wonders: What is the real story behind Dimona?

Many of its workers, employed by the factory since its inception, lost their pension rights because management did not forward their dues to the respective pension funds. And they had nowhere to turn for compensation.

Had their injuries been physical they would have been treated immediately. But their deep mental trauma, their gnawing fear and frustration was ignored. They were left to stew.

Of course, soon after their drama began, in July, they were visited by a throng of government ministers, party leaders and Histadrut managers, all promising to help, clapping the workers on their backs before hurrying back to their limousines.

But that help was never delivered. The abandoned workers seemed to be awaiting some Godot who would never come. Not knowing where to turn, they began to feel old, their lives wasted, their futures barren and idle. Like people landed on some alien, threatening shore, they began to feel they had nothing to lose.

To those who remember that our MKs granted themselves a 30-percent wage increase earlier this year, and still aspire to more, who see Histadrut managers continuing to draw large salaries while making empty gestures, what is happening to our society seems beyond understanding.

The investors who bought Dimona Textile apparently did so to benefit from the cash incentives offered by the government, then allowed it to die. They should be the first to be held responsible for their employees' tragedy.

But they aren't the only accountable ones here.

The Dimona workers' ongoing saga is a grave indictment of the opulent, egotistic and self-serving body that calls itself our national leadership.

The writer, a former press foreman, served on a workers' committee for 15 years.

A conductor's faith in art

Kiss reunion tour boosts US concert industry

THEATER REVIEW
NAOMI DOUDAI

Taking Sides by Ronald Harwood. Hebrew, Rivka Meshulah. Direction: Micah Lewensohn. Design: Ruth Dar. Lighting: Brian Harris. Hebrew title, *Hamanatzeah*. The Cameri Theater at ZOA House, Tel Aviv.

THE Cameri, once more defying the popular prediction that theater is dying or dead, closes the old year with this breathtaking production. I can hardly remember an event in theater that held me, with those around me, so spellbound.

What we have here is one of the most relentlessly searching examinations of Nazi guilt from a post-war, postmodern historical perspective. Ronald Harwood, a prize-winning playwright, but more to the point, a South African Jew, dares to question the judgment of history regarding the denazified but stigmatized German conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler. The main thrust of *Taking Sides* is that Harwood pretends he doesn't.

His brief is based on the conviction that the conductor, principally a man of faith, believed in the supremacy of art over politics. He was inspired, perhaps naively, to rescue culture from barbarity. To his own values he was no traitor. At the most he was used, a propaganda tool of an implacable authoritarian regime. In Harwood's own words, "For those who live in a democracy 50 years later, it's easy to criticize. If I were in the same situation, in the same period, I don't know if I would have behaved differently."

Ultimately, with Beethoven's Ninth playing in their ears, Harwood leaves the audience — as the title implies — to decide for itself. Micah Lewensohn emboldens what is a perfectly achieved play with powerful direction, a trusty translation, and consummate casting.

Of the six roles, some of them at times slightly overwrought, even the most minor is otherwise played to perfection. Merav Gruber's distraught wife of a Jewish pianist though the briefest is deeply moving.

As the US colonel's correct German secretary, Shirli Golan's chilling, sculpted presence, tense with inner agony, is a formidable



Oded Teomi gives a towering performance as Wilhelm Furtwängler. (Haramay)

exercise in restraint unusual in local actors. The refugee Jewish US captain, another sensitive portrait, is played by Alon Ofri with a mixture of delicacy and impassioned defiance.

Of these perhaps the most arresting is Yossi Krantz's Helmut, the shabby, second-rate fiddler and ambivalent but ever acquiescent informer. It is presented with a subtle range of emotion by an actor who for the first time has been the chance to display to the full a long-suspected but hitherto unexploited talent.

In the leading role is Oded Teomi, impeccably groomed (if weakly bewigged) in a towering, though at times overstrung, study of the leonine maestro among musicians.

Complete with the mannerisms, the hauteur and tempestuous temperament of a great creative spirit, the personality he presents is a powerful take-off of the great virtuoso. Nathan Dater, however, as his coarse and clumsy, anti-cultural American interrogator, by contrast, is a more

gives the performance of a lifetime.

His colonel, now laconic, now livid, is a triumph of simple sincerity and strong feeling.

Fraught with alien *weltanschauung* and warring attitudes, the two meet in some of the most stirring scenes a Jewish audience can have ever witnessed.

This is a show that must be seen, with the supplement of simultaneous translation if necessary. Earphones, with the English version spoken by the imitable Dawn Nadell and Johnny Phillips, are now available.

It wasn't a particularly good year for people in the US concert industry, unless you happened to breathe fire, spit blood and wear a lot of greasepaint.

Kiss's reunion tour was the top money-earner in North America for 1996, taking in \$43.6 million and beating acts like Garth Brooks, Neil Diamond and Rod Stewart, the concert industry trade publication *Pollstar* reported Wednesday.

US consumers spent an estimated \$1.05 billion on concerts during 1996, *Pollstar* said. That's up slightly from the \$950 million in 1995 but not approaching the record \$1.4 billion set in 1994.

The increased dollar volume was largely due to higher ticket prices and masked a particularly weak showing for many veteran artists out on the road, said Gary Bongiovanni, *Pollstar* editor.

Kiss was the spectacular exception. The band reunited its original members, donned the cumbersome costumes and used truckloads of special effects for 92 dates — leaving sellouts in their wake. "Probably everybody except [Kiss member] Gene Simmons was surprised by how strong that was," Bongiovanni said.

The summer's other high-profile rock reunion — of the Sex Pistols — didn't even register in *Pollstar*'s top 50 concert draws.

The concert circuit was flooded this summer with stars of the 1970s — Styx, Kansas, Steely Dan,



Alanis Morissette was one of the year's more popular acts.

Steve Miller, Chicago and Crosby, Stills and Nash. Many played to a lot of empty seats.

"The '70s acts didn't work, except for the Eagles and Kiss," said Jim Koplik of Metropolitan Entertainment, one of the Northeast's top promoters.

"The '70s, I think ... are over. There were a lot of '70s acts out last year and I think most promoters will stay away next year."

Artists demanded increased guaranteed payments to perform this year, Bongiovanni said. That forced promoters to raise

ticket prices, turning off all but the acts' most fanatic followers, Bongiovanni said.

It's been a down year in general for the music industry. Compact disc sales are flat and many in the business wonder if any artists will emerge to lift them out of the doldrums.

On the plus side, a number of acts established themselves as solid, if not spectacular, concert draws this year: Alanis Morissette, Oasis, Bush, Smashing Pumpkins, Phish and Tori Amos, Bongiovanni said. (AP)

Travolta wins box-office battle

CHRISTMAS Day was indeed spirited for New Line Cinema, whose *Michael* was the surprise winner of the holiday's US box-office competition. Despite mixed reviews, Nora Ephron's film — featuring John Travolta as a lusty archangel — took in \$5.4 million to push aside the two previous weekend leaders, *Jerry Maguire* and *Beavis and Butt-head Do America*, which grossed about \$3.1 million and \$2.7 million, respectively.

The PG-rated *Michael* cut across demographic lines and was as strong in small towns as in big cities, said Al Shapiro, senior executive vice president of New Line distribution.

"Since many theaters didn't

open until 5 or 6 [p.m.] yesterday, the true test of how *Michael* will fare should be today," he said Thursday. "Still, we always expected it to be big. John Travolta is a huge star. The only one who can compete with him is Tom Cruise — and he had his day [in *Maguire*] last week."

In other openings, the critically panned *Terms of Endearment* followed up. *The Evening Star*, took in \$1.1 million on 1,263 screens for ninth place.

The controversial *Evita* brought in more than \$71,000 in two theaters. Shows were sold out at Hollywood's Cinerama Dome, where it set a one-day house record, as well as at Manhattan's *Spacy*, *Lincoln*, *Squars*, which

screening. The film will open in 21 more cities Wednesday and go wide January 10.

Also in limited release, Albert Brooks' *Mother* grossed approximately \$53,866 in six theaters; Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet* did capacity business in three theaters, bringing in more than \$30,000 despite a four-hour running time that limited the number of daily shows to three; Gramercy's *The Portrait of a Lady* took in \$10,311 in three theaters and *I'm Not Rappaport* \$3,081 in two theaters; Columbia's *Some Mother's Son* took in \$3,034 on three screens while the studio's *The People vs. Larry Flynt* took in an estimated \$48,000 at five theaters. (LA Times)

Voice of Army Radio, Leah Oz, dead at 31

LEAH Oz, the Army Radio broadcaster whose sexy voice was treasured by thousands of soldiers, committed suicide Sunday afternoon. Oz had taken a leave of absence from Army Radio and been undergoing treatment for depression resulting from the high-stress job which she had dedicated herself to since 1982, when she began working at Army Radio to fulfill her IDF service. However, her mother-in-law and stepfather Aaron Miller believed that the 31-year-old performer — who kept listeners smiling with shows like the prize-winning *Mama's Voice*, *Galgol-Leah* (*Shooting from the Hip* — had won signs of recovering. On Sunday afternoon, for the first time in three months, they left Oz at their Gedera home and led for a brief musical celebration. At 20 minutes after they had Vicky had a feeling that something terrible had happened. She called Miller to call home and check on her; she didn't want to call herself as she was afraid her nervous voice would alarm her daughter. When Oz didn't answer the phone, they drove home and discovered she had hanged herself. A teenager, Oz had wanted to sing, but she refocused this year after she began broadcasting Army Radio. Her radio shows, which included music and call-in shows, often directed specifically at soldiers and their families. She had also worked at Radio 3

IPO's all-star celebrations: A landmark in musical history

THE ISRAEL Philharmonic Orchestra's 60th anniversary celebrations continued with two exceptional musical celebrations and a disappointing concert.

The display of the finest violinists in the world in a long evening of violin fireworks was one of the festival's most exciting events. Three hours of superb piano playing featured a sublime, controlled and powerful reading of Bruch's First Violin Concerto by Shlomo Minz, and the spectacular playing of two shorter French pieces by Maxim Vengerov.

The real star of the evening, Gil Shaham, mesmerized the audience with his caressing reading of the Dvorak Romance and his brilliant, sweeping rendition of Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy*. Daniel Barenboim's rendition of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was a study in musical greatness to which the orchestra responded with willing enthusiasm. Pinchas Zukerman played Beethoven's Violin Concerto in a similar manner.

But at the actual 60th anniversary gala, it seemed as though the orchestra had had enough. It played magically under Barenboim in the overture to *Oberon* (Weber). But its rendition of Brahms's Second Symphony was stale. Even the playing of a Mozart serenade left a lot to be desired.

Overall, however, this 10-day musical bonanza was one of the greatest musical festivals in the history of Israel, the IPO and probably the world.

Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, December 22, 24, 25. Michael Ajzenstadt

CONCERT ROUNDUP

LOUIS Lortie presented a poetic and delicate reading of the Schumann piano concerto in the Schumann piano concerto in the Haifa Symphony Orchestra under the sensitive baton of music director Stanley Spierke.

At one point it seemed as if we are in the midst of an outburst of emotions, and in the center of the romantic stormy era in which the protagonist agonizes over his fate. Yet then came a moment of tender beauty celebrating the joy of love and accepting its pangs.

All this was obvious whether at the most beautiful cadenza or in the subtle dialogue with the orchestra, or whether in the opening and closing grand movement or the middle more gentle one. Lortie is not only a great pianist. What impresses you is in his performance is the way he interprets the music, the way he delves into the bottom of the score and his inner self to reveal some of the most beautiful lines written by Schumann.

In short a great rendition by a first-rate pianist. Haifa Auditorium, Dec. 21. Michael Ajzenstadt

THE Liturgica's opening concert presented sacred texts from three different cultures — German-Romantic, Hungarian and American-Jewish. But it was short on major works.

And the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and the Scottish National Chorus, conducted by David Shalton, frequently failed to

achieve a reasonable balance of sound.

Mendelssohn's Psalm 42 was rendered in grand English oratorio style.

The choir sounded as if it was on alien territory, and the sopranos, even the bright, clear Kelley Nassief, were harsh.

The theatrical rather than liturgical aspects were emphasized in Leonard Bernstein's *Kaddish*. And narrator Haim Topol's amplification system exacerbated his sticky pathos.

There was consolation in Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus*. Tamas Daroczi's lyric tenor blended in well with the choir, whose impressive masses of sound reflected this work's spirit.

Jerusalem Theater, Dec. 24. Ury Eppstein

THE Hillel Hebrew University Orchestra conducted by Anita Kamien, one of the country's few female conductors, selected a Romantic program for its winter concert.

The orchestra displays a rich, balanced sound, accurate intonation — mainly in the strings — and above all, enthusiasm. The romantic ambience of Weber's *Freschitz*, *Overture* and Schubert's Unfinished Symphony was conveyed with warmth and involvement. Russian-born Emil Israel

Women raise profile of Ramat Hasharon

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

A YEAR ago, in Istanbul, Menahem Nebenhaus stunned the waiters in a restaurant he entered with his orchestra because "...it had been a while since they had seen one man entering their restaurant surrounded by 14 women."

While many have argued that the all-female Israel Camerata Ramat Hasharon is basically a gimmick, Nebenhaus, one of Israel's promising conductors, adamantly believes that "the gimmick ends after a few bars. Then it is just the music."

Which is why the orchestra now even has a male double-bass player.

"There is no reason to break the orchestra tradition of female musicians, but the quality must come first. There is no female monopoly here, quite the contrary."

In its early stages, the Camerata played a very conservative repertoire basically comprising Mozart, Corelli, and Handel. Nebenhaus somewhat extended this repertoire to include romantic and classic composers who wrote for a string ensemble, as well as contemporary composers.

"Earlier this season we performed a concert for electric guitar by Yaron Gotfried and next

season we will premiere a new opus by Ramat Hasharon native composer Hagar Kadima."

Nebenhaus, 36, continues to teach and conduct youth orchestras in Israel and abroad, and also to lead concerts in festivals and with orchestras all over the world.

Next month he will lead a series of concerts with the Haifa Symphony Orchestra, in which he chose a somewhat unusual program including the rarely performed Sibelius Sixth Symphony, and a baroque vocal work by Viadana which he arranged for the orchestra and which will be performed in a quasi-stereo setting in which the audience will be sandwiched by the brass and strings.

Before that, however, Nebenhaus brings his Camerata orchestra to the Tel Aviv Museum this Saturday for a somewhat intriguing program of compositions by Pachelbel, Elgar and Shostakovich as well as the Glazunov Saxophone Concerto with Yakira Levi as soloist.

The program is repeated next Sunday in Ramat Hasharon.

This season the Camerata plays each of its six programs in Tel Aviv as well as in its home town.

Not so single

Cortese, who played the evil brother in *Melrose Place* is a former MTV host, and the cast of NBC's *The Guy* on six upcoming in the US, playing a single who befriends Jonathan Silverman. Better hurry; the network plans to pull *The Single* from its schedules. (Washington Post)

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15

THIS LAST WEEKS ON WEEK CHARTS			WEEK CHARTS		
#1	#2	#3	ARTIST	TITLE	WEEKS
#1	4	7	OST	EVITA	1
#2	2	6	TONI BRAXTON	SECRETS	1
#3	5	7	SPICE GIRLS	SPICE	1
#4	6	18	RAMI KLEINSTEIN	COLLECTION	1
#5	1	4	ELIUD BANAI	OD MEAT	1
#6	10	6	VIA	SPIRITS OF THE GREAT	1
#7	16	12	SIMPLY RED	THE GREATEST HITS	1
#8	3	5	ENIGMA	LE ROI EST MORT	1
#9	7	3	NO DOUBT	TRAGIC KINGDOM	1
#10	12	41	SHLOMO ARTZI	TWO	1
#11	11	6	VAYA CON DIOS	TWO	1
#12	15	4	GEORGE MICHAEL	OLDER	1
#13	22	2	RONIT SHAHAR	FAREWELL TO INNOCENCE	1
#14	19	2	FRIENDS OF NATASHA	THE CONCERT	1
#15	20	3	VIA	HIT LIST-5	1

Tower Records' top-selling albums for last week

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies

The Annual Jimmy Carter Lecture to be delivered by

Dr. Saeb Erakat

on

The Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations: The Road Ahead

The lecture will take place on Thursday, January 2, 1997, at 18:15 in the Bar Shira Auditorium, Ramat Aviv Campus.

- The public is invited -

ISRAEL FOUNDATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

ONE BRUSHSTROKE AND ANOTHER

Exhibition of paintings by residents of the

ILAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED, GILO

at the City Gallery, 17 Jaffa St., Jerusalem under the patronage of Aliza Olmert, wife of the Mayor of Jerusalem

Opening: Tuesday, December 31, 1996, at 5 p.m.

Greetings: Tamir Kolkik - Honorary President, ILAN-Jerusalem Yehoram Gaus - Member of the City Council, Holder of the Arts Portfolio, and Director of the Authority for Residents with Special Needs Hedva Barkari - Artist

Exhibition closes January 31, 1997

Gallery hours: Sun. - Thur. 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Supported by the National Insurance Institute, the Jerusalem Foundation, and the Arts Division of the Jerusalem Municipality

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Tuesday, December 31, 1996

Cement firms: No room here for Japanese producer

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE local cement market "has no room" for another major producer, sources in the industry said yesterday.

The plant will potentially bite deep into the market share of Nesher Cement, the country's sole producer.

The monopoly, which is jointly owned by the Clal-Israel and Koor Industries, has three facilities which compete with various importers.

Sources close to the company expressed doubt that a foreign company intends to make such a large investment at a time when there is an oversupply of cement in the local market.

About a month ago, Nesher managing director Yitzhak Davidi forecast demand for cement would fall five percent in 1997. The forecast was based on the drop in building starts in 1996, which has led to a drop in demand and accumulation of stock. In April, Nesher was forced to temporarily shut down three mills because it had accumulated a large quantity of cement which is difficult to store over long periods.

Neither Davidi nor Nesher chairman Yossi Rosen could be reached for comment.

During the past few weeks, several foreign companies expressed interest in entering the local cement market, but all backed out. One reason is the fact that the market is very capital-intensive, said a source.

Nesher's board of directors recently decided to establish a dry-line for the production of clinker at its plant in Ramle at an investment of \$175m. The dry-line, which will produce about 5000 tons of clinker a day, is scheduled to be completed by mid-1999.

'96 growth slowed to 4.4%; unemployment down to 6.5%

THE economy expanded by an overall 4.4 percent this year, after having grown by 7.1% and 6.4% during 1995 and 1994 respectively, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

The report was based on preliminary macro-economic data gathered through November. While the figures clearly support accumulating data which indicate the economy has been slowing down over the past two quarters, after half a decade of robust growth, the CBS also reported that unemployment has declined to 6.5% from 7% during 1995.

However, the CBS said the labor market began showing some signs of weakness during the second half of the year, when job applica-

tions and unemployment compensation requests registered some growth.

Business-sector growth stood at 5.2%, while industrial growth reached 5.6%, and construction activity expanded by 4.8%.

Gross per capita product rose 2% and reached \$16,900, after growing by 4% during each of the two preceding years.

On the down side, the trade deficit hit a record \$10.7 billion, according to preliminary data, after reaching \$9.8b. during the previous year and \$7.9b. during 1994.

The current account deficit, which measures

the gap between imports and exports of goods and services, as well as unilateral transfers, reached \$4.6b., or 4.8% of gross domestic product, according to preliminary CBS estimates. Government expenses equalled 47% of gross domestic product.

The annual pace of import growth slowed to 8% as opposed to 9% during the previous year and 12%-15% during the four preceding years. Direct defense-related imports, however, rose 17% after growing by 11% during 1995.

The public's savings continued to shrink, reaching 4% of available income, as opposed to 5% the previous year, and more than 11% in 1992.



A Pakistani vendor parks his food stall, containing snacks and tea, in the sea at a Karachi beach yesterday. It is not uncommon for stallholders to wade a few feet into the sea, because it gives them an advantage in catching customers looking for something to eat or drink after they swim. (Reuters)

No New Year reprieve for Iraqis

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraqis relying on food rations for more than six years will have to wait a little longer before seeing the fruits of Baghdad's newly implemented oil-for-food deal with the UN.

There was no change in the amount of rations for January listed in a government announcement printed in official newspapers yesterday. Officials have promised to increase the rations after the implementation of the deal but cautioned that it would take some time to sell the oil and buy the food.

Iraq started limited oil exports three weeks ago. Under the pact, Baghdad is allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to buy food and medicine for the Iraqi population, suffering from stringent trade sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Officials have not said when the food will arrive.

Each Iraqi is currently entitled to 125 kg. of rice, 7 kg. of flour, 500 grams of sugar, 750 grams of cooking oil, and 100 grams of tea every

month. These items are sold by the government at giveaway prices.

Traders and money dealers in Baghdad said that the Iraqi currency slipped slightly against the dollar yesterday because there was no increase in rations in the announcement carried by newspapers which asked retailers to collect supplies of the rationed goods from Trade Ministry warehouses for distribution.

The dinar was trading at 1,200 to the dollar, compared to 1,100 on Sunday.

Bankers: Strike's month's-end timing may be harmful

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

CONSIDERING the strike's coincidence with the month's end, the public stands to suffer considerable financial losses unless the labor upheaval comes to an end, bankers said yesterday.

Bank workers returned to work yesterday afternoon, following strikes in almost all branches in the morning. So far, bankers claim the strike has inconvenienced customers but has otherwise caused relatively little damage.

However, if the strike continues complications are expected to surface since it is coming both at the end of a month and a calendar year.

Assuming the bank workers continue to strike, employees will not be able to withdraw their wages or make end-of-the-month payments.

Meanwhile, Ze'ev Abeles, supervisor of banks at the Bank of Israel, instructed the banks not to calculate Monday as a business day. This means that Sunday's foreign currency representative rates will remain valid also for Monday. In addition, payment obligations which were due to be paid yesterday, will be postponed to today.

First International Bank branches were the first to open yesterday, three hours after the start of the strike. Several hours later, United Mizrahi Bank, Union Bank, and Mercantile Discount Bank branches opened.

The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange remained closed all day. Traders expressed fears that if the strike continues, there is a risk that the last few weeks' positive atmosphere on the market will be reversed.

German shares up 28% in '96

CLIFFORD COONAN

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - The German stock exchange yesterday celebrated a record 1996, with the DAX-30 share index 28 percent above its level at the end of 1995 and share trading volume up 40.5 percent to DM 2,434 billion.

Dealers said share trading was boosted by low interest rates and the successful flotation of Deutsche Telekom AG, Europe's biggest-ever initial public offering, in November.

Business was also good on the debt market and for futures and options.

The Deutsche Telekom float offered the opportunity to woo small investors away from their beloved bonds.

A greater interest in managed equity funds also helped ease the shift from debt, long perceived to

be relatively risk-free, to higher-return but often riskier, equities, they said.

The busiest month of the year for shares was March, when turnover was around DM 286b. The Telekom flotation boosted stock exchange turnover in November, normally a quiet month, to DM 249.3b. from DM 136.2b. a year earlier.

Deutsche Telekom, traded from November 18, was the most heavily traded stock in November, with DM 34.6b. of its shares changing hands.

For the overall cash market, the busiest month was January, with total turnover of DM 967.5b., of which around DM 724b. came from debt. Overall turnover in the German bond market in 1996 was DM 6,530b.

Livnat to Bezeq: Stop favoring own Internet service

JUDY SIEGEL

COMMUNICATIONS Minister Limor Livnat yesterday ordered Bezeq to stop funneling calls to its 135 Internet service in a way that gives its Internet provider an advantage over private providers.

Ministry Director-General Shlomo Waxe said that people who dial 135 to hook up to the Internet on a non-subscription

basis are to be allowed to choose a provider freely from a list, one of which is Bezeqnet.

The users provided a special ID number. But since the service was introduced a few weeks ago, Bezeq linked many of the callers directly to the Israel Internet Exchange (IDX), which routed the calls to Bezeqnet at the expense of the other providers.

After the private providers complained to the ministry, technicians checked and found that they were justified, Waxe said. "Bezeq was not given permission to do this; it did this on its own."

From now on, 135 service will continue, but without Bezeq's unfair advantage, Waxe said.

In discussions with the ministry, it was agreed that all private Internet providers would offer non-subscription services through 135, and that Bezeqnet would detach itself from direct links to the IDX.

No comment was available from Bezeq due to yesterday's strike.



BUSINESS BRIEFS

G7 economic policymakers to meet February 8: Finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the Group of Seven industrial nations will meet in Berlin on February 8, international monetary sources said yesterday.

The sources, who declined to be identified, described the meeting as routine. The G7 - Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States - traditionally meets early each year to take stock of the world economy, the currency markets and other issues of mutual interest.

Turkey agrees gas purchases from Turkmenistan: Turkey will buy up to 8 billion cubic metres of natural gas annually from Turkmenistan from the year 2000, Turkish Energy Minister Recai Kutan said yesterday.

"All technical studies will be completed by February 15, according to the gas agreement signed with Turkmenistan," Kutan said in a statement.

"Physical investments will begin by June, 1997 at the latest," he said, after arriving back from a four-day visit to Tehran, where he met Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh and Turkmen Deputy Prime Minister Batur Sardjiev.

He said Turkmen gas would be transported to Turkey after Iran and Turkey completed sections of a pipeline from Tabriz to the eastern Turkish city of Erzurum as part of a giant gas deal signed between Ankara and Tehran in August.

Venezuela modifies foreign exchange band system: Venezuela's Central Bank said yesterday it would modify its current foreign exchange bands system by re-setting the central parity rate at 472 bolivars per dollar.

As of January 2, that central parity rate will depreciate by 1.32 percent per month within trading bands set 7.5% either side of the core rate, the Central Bank said in a paid notice taken out in the national press.

"The sliding core rate should be taken as an indicator of the average exchange rate expected to prevail through the year. However, within the bands the exchange rate will reflect market conditions," the bank said.

When the bands system was first established in July, the Central Bank set the central rate at 470 bolivars per dollar with a monthly depreciation rate of 1.5%.

Albania to clamp down on tax evasion in 1997: Albania's Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi said yesterday the government would try to increase revenues next year by launching a major drive against tax evasion, local news agency ATA reported.

Meksi said in an interview that tax evasion was the main source of the budget deficit.

"There is a deficit in the realization of the revenues... (Taxes and revenues from customs) are the areas for which we are to work harder in the future," Meksi said, adding there would be no increase in taxes.

Albania's budget deficit in October was 10% of gross domestic product, according to latest figures from the Central Bank of Albania.

Meksi said Albania's economic growth had risen to 14% in 1996, compared to 13.4% a year ago, and described this as a major achievement of his government.

Swedish PM says EMU could lead to federation: As Euro-scepticism grows in Sweden, Prime Minister Goran Persson has fuelled concern that Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) could transform the European Union into a federation with uniform fiscal policies.

In a column in the daily newspaper Svenska Dagbladet, Persson said that if fiscal policies became a union matter, the EU would become a federation, quite different from what was envisaged when Sweden voted to join.

"The EU would be transformed to something completely different than the EU the Swedish people, after some agony and a long and trying debate, approved (in a November 1994 referendum)," Persson said.

He refrained from saying whether he was for or against EMU but urged a discussion on what monetary union would really mean.

Banc One to buy Liberty Bancorp: Banc One Corp. will acquire Liberty Bancorp Inc., another Midwest bank holding company, for \$546 million in stock, the companies said yesterday.

Terms of the agreement call for Liberty shareholders to receive 1.175 shares of Banc One for each share of Liberty.

In a statement, the companies said they expect the deal to close at the end of the second quarter of 1997. Banc One's stock was down 37.5 cents at \$44.50 in early trading on the New York Stock Exchange, and Liberty was up \$8 at \$49.75 on Nasdaq.

Banc One, based in Cleveland, operates 59 banks in 12 states stretching from West Virginia to Arizona and is the 10th largest bank holding company in the nation.

Liberty, based in Oklahoma City, operates 29 banking offices in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The acquisition will make Banc One the operator of the largest banking company in Oklahoma City and one of the top three banking companies in the state.

Apple CEO paid nearly \$3 million this year: Apple Computer Inc. paid Chairman and Chief Executive Gilbert Amelio nearly \$3 million in fiscal 1996, while outgoing Chief Executive Michael Spindler received a total of \$4.66 million.

According to the company's annual proxy statement filed Friday with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Amelio's compensation could rise substantially if he can turn the troubled computer maker around, reflecting the value of stock options and performance shares.

If Apple stock rises 5% a year for the next five years, Apple said Amelio's option to buy 1 million shares of Apple stock would be worth \$16.5m. If the stock rises 10%, the options would be worth \$41.8m.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS

Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)			
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.790	5.000	5.375
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250
German mark (DM 200,000)	2.850	1.825	2.125
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.825	0.750	1.000
Yen (10 million yen)			

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (27.12.96)					
Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep.
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.6172	3.6785	3.10	3.34	3.6419
German mark	3.2394	3.2917	2.04	2.15	3.2510
Pound sterling	2.0638	2.1170	2.04	2.15	2.0638
French franc	5.4269	5.5145	5.33	5.43	5.4269
Japanese yen (100)	0.6174	0.6274	0.60	0.64	0.6218
Dutch guilder	2.8509	2.8788	2.78	2.92	2.8509
Swiss franc	1.8563	1.8863	1.82	1.92	1.8897
Swedish krona	2.4171	2.4681	2.37	2.49	2.4240
Norwegian krona	0.4720	0.4797	0.46	0.50	0.4720
Danish krone	0.5076	0.5087	0.49	0.52	0.5022
Finland mark	0.5448	0.5536	0.53	0.57	0.5485
Canadian dollar	0.6977	0.7090	0.68	0.72	0.7025
Australian dollar	2.3708	2.4088	2.32	2.43	2.3910
Austrian dollar	2.5823	2.6240	2.52	2.67	2.5982
S. African rand	0.8928	0.9021	0.82	0.91	0.8928
Belgian franc (10)	1.0118	1.0277	0.99	1.05	1.0187
Austrian schilling (10)	2.9608	3.0084	2.90	3.08	2.9608
Italian lira (1000)	2.1185	2.1827	2.08	2.18	2.1185
Jordanian dinar	4.5000	4.8100	4.50	4.81	4.5000
Egyptian pound	0.8200	1.0000	0.82	1.00	0.8200
ECU	4.0108	4.0784	4.01	4.10	4.0108
Irish punt	5.3742	5.4628	5.28	5.54	5.3742
Spanish peseta (100)	2.4746	2.5148	2.43	2.55	2.4746

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

National Insurance Institute



Benefit Rights for a Handicapped Child Broadened to Include all Income Groups

Effective January 1, 1995 all parents of handicapped children who fall into the categories listed below will be entitled to benefits regardless of their income.

Parents who submit claims not later than March 9, 1997 will be eligible for a benefit payment retroactive to January 1, 1995, or to the beginning of their eligibility period, but not earlier than January 1, 1995. Those submitting a claim after March 9, 1997, who are found to be eligible, will receive the benefit only from the first of the month in which the claim was made.

Who is entitled to a handicapped child's benefit?

- An infant who is not yet 3 years old, who suffers from a severe illness (including a malignant disease or a severe secondary disease caused by one), or who suffers from a severe development problem, or who is blind in accordance with the regulations.
- A child aged 3 - 18
 - who is not able to perform everyday activities without major assistance from another person (getting around his house, dressing, washing, eating, personal hygiene), or who is in need of constant supervision to prevent him from endangering his life or that of others;
 - who suffers from one of the following: dysautonomia, cystic fibrosis, autism, P.D.D., schizophrenia, blindness, thalassemia, haemophilia A (up to age 14)
 - who receives dialysis treatment at least twice a week, or chemotherapy or radiation treatments for a malignant disease
- An infant with Down's Syndrome
- An infant or child with impaired hearing with a hearing threshold in each ear of 45 decibels
- An infant or child who has undergone a transplant (kidney, heart, pancreas, live, bone marrow from a foreign donor) - during the first year after the transplant

Information and Public Relations

Key Representative Rates

US Dollar .NIS 3.2610
Sterling .NIS 5.4824
Mark .NIS 2.0983

INTL STOCK MARKETS

New York market indexes

DJ Industrial 8548.37 -11.54
DJ Transport 2287.11 -7.34
DJ Utility 2552.12 -0.33

NYSE stocks

Volume up on 1000
Volume down (in 1000s) 159619

Other stock market indexes

FTSE 100 4211.7 -24.7
Nikkei 22386.46 -25.2

Israeli stocks in US

NYSE / AMEX / NASDAQ / OTC
Tel Aviv 6.5 -0.1

AG Associates

Alcoa 3.12 -0.05
Ariston 1.02 -0.02

Banking

Bank of America 27.35 -0.15
Bank One 14.75 -0.10

Chemicals

Dow Chemical 38.25 -0.25
Eastman Kodak 43.75 -0.25

Commodities

Oil 22.15 -0.15
Gold 352.50 -0.25

INTL MONEY MARKETS

Dollar crossrates (US)

Pound 1.5613 0
Euro 1.6363 0

Labor rates

Dollar 3 months 5.625 0
Dollar 6 months 5.625 0

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds

INTL COMMODITIES AND METALS

US commodities

Crude Oil 22.15 -0.15
Gold 352.50 -0.25

London commodities

Crude Oil 22.15 -0.15
Gold 352.50 -0.25

Spot market metals (US)

Copper 0.92 0
Silver 0.48 0

New York metal futures

Crude Oil 22.15 -0.15
Gold 352.50 -0.25

London metal fixes

Copper 0.92 0
Silver 0.48 0

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

NEW YORK: Chrysler 23.75 -0.25, GM 23.75 -0.25, Ford 23.75 -0.25
LONDON: British Airways 12.50 -0.10, BT 12.50 -0.10, British Petroleum 12.50 -0.10
PARIS: Air France 12.50 -0.10, Bouygues 12.50 -0.10, Bouygues Telecom 12.50 -0.10
FRANKFURT: Deutsche Telekom 12.50 -0.10, Commerzbank 12.50 -0.10, Dresdner Bank 12.50 -0.10

Eurobourses gain, topping fine year

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - Key European stock markets advanced yesterday, with London hitting a new high, while Wall Street, following up a record close on Friday, made further progress in early New Year business. A quiet day is expected today with Japan and some European centers, including Germany, on holiday.

Late profit-taking sends Dow lower

NEW YORK (AP) - Stocks pulled lower near the close yesterday as investors tinkered with their portfolios before the year's end, securing some profits from last week's modest rally.

Predictions for the New Year

Cocktail parties, '50s look and certified e-mail will be 'in' in 1997

IN 1997, America's "in" crowd will socialize at cocktail parties, spend vacations on cruises or at spas, dress with a retro-'50s look and send certified e-mail messages to keep in touch. Only those behind the times will listen to country music or rap, camp out or go mountain biking.

Internet will offer new worlds, but more gridlock

FOR many computer owners, 1997 will be the year when Internet users will begin to see more features aimed at making the Net more lifelike. But it is also likely to be marked by frequent communications breakdowns caused, in part, by increased demand.

Bundesbank president: EMU to reduce economic independence

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer has stepped into a row over the future European single currency by saying it would clearly reduce the financial and economic independence of those countries involved.

WALL STREET REPORT

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England Test rained out, sides draw

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) - The second and last cricket Test between Zimbabwe and England was called off yesterday two hours before play was due to resume on the fifth and final day.

Heavy overnight rain had swamped the edge of the playing square and it proved impossible for ground staff to carry out mopping up operations in time for any prospect of a result.

A victory for either side was unlikely in any event and by general consent between the umpires and the two captains, Alistair Campbell and Mike Atherton, the match was abandoned.

England had an effective lead of 136 overnight, having reached 195-3, with Alec Stewart on 101 and Graham Thorpe on 50. It was Stewart's ninth Test century.

They constructed a 106 runs partnership for the fourth wicket following the loss of Atherton, Nick Knight and Nasser Hussain, and put England in a command of events.

With one day left, Atherton would have expected to declare at some stage, leaving Zimbabwe a near impossible target, but with enough time to get them out if they collapsed.

However, the rain storms, prevalent in Zimbabwe at this time of year, prevented any such plan being put into effect.

The moral victory, following two drawn Tests, belongs to England.

It needed only one more run before time ran out in Bulawayo before Christmas and had to settle for a draw with scores level - the first time in 119 years of Test cricket.

In Harare, given full playing time, the team would have had the luxury of setting Zimbabwe a large second innings target. But nine-and-a-half-hours play was lost altogether and so Zimbabwe was left off the hook.

This was the first series between Zimbabwe and England, the youngest and the oldest of Test nations.

Before England continues its overseas tour to New Zealand at the end of the week it plays two 50 overs a side internationals against Zimbabwe, having lost the first of the series of three in Bulawayo by two wickets.

Atherton said after the abandoned match that he expected England fast bowler Dominic Cork to join the squad in New Zealand to beef up the attack, having sorted out domestic problems in England.

Concerning his own poor form in Zimbabwe, he said, "I have had worse spells than this and expect to come out of it soon."

England first innings 156 (G. Whittall 4-18, H. Streak 4-43)
Zimbabwe first innings 215 (G. Flower 73, D. Gough 4-40)
England second innings (overnight) 195-3
N. Knight c Campbell b Streak 30
M. Atherton c Campbell b Streak 101
A. Stewart not out 56
N. Hussain c Houghton b Streak 5
G. Thorpe not out 5
Extras (lb-5 nb-1 w-1) 7
Total (for three wickets, 53 overs) 195
Fall of wickets: 1-72-73 3-83
Bowling: Streak 18-5-47-1, Brandes 21-4-5-0 (w), Clange 7-5-31 (nb), Whittall 14-6-16-0, Streak 25-6-42-2, G. Flower 7-2-9-0.
Result: Match drawn.



OUTSTANDING ATHLETE - The loudest cheers at last night's ceremony in Tel Aviv for the outstanding sportspeople of 1996 went to Olympic bronze medalist windsurfer Gal Friedman, seen here receiving an award from Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sport Moshe Peled. Friedman, together with his coach Gur Steinberg and fitness coach Omrit Yanilov, received a bronze Olympic pin, trophies and a cash bonus. Hosted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, the ceremony honored athletes who excelled in international events. Among the other athletes honored were Yael Arad (judo), Gocha Chichiasvili (wrestling), Yoav Bruck, Vadim Alexev, Dan Kutler and Eytan Orbach (swimming), Lydia Hatuel Zuckerman (fencing), Dani Krasnov (track) and Paralympic athletes Isak Cohen, Ze'ev Bitar (swimming), Yitzhak Baranes and Tami Carmeli (bowls), Nahman Wolf (track) and Doron Shaziri (shooting).

Injury-ridden Canadiens edge Panthers, 2-1

MIAMI (Reuters) - Vincent Damphousse scored both Montreal goals and Jocelyn Thibault made 29 saves as the undermanned Canadiens edged the Florida Panthers 2-1 to end a seven-game winless streak Sunday.

Damphousse's power-play goal 35 seconds into the third period was the game-winner for the Canadiens, who played without injured regulars Saku Koivu, Stephane Quintal, Vladimir Malakhov, Marc Bureau, Shayne Corson, Martin Rucinsky and Valeri Bure.

"This was like a playoff game," said Canadiens coach Mario Tremblay. "I don't think too many people gave us much of a chance tonight against the Panthers with all of our injuries."

The Canadiens gained a 5-on-3 advantage with 1:04 left in the second period when Florida's Martin Straka was penalized for holding and teammate Ed Jovanovski was sent off for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Montreal was still up two men when Mark Recchi passed from the right faceoff circle to Brian Savage at the side of the net. Savage flicked the puck in front and Damphousse scored from the low slot, beating goaltender Mark Fitzgerald to the stick side.

"It came when we really needed it," Damphousse said. "We had a minute left on the 5-on-3 coming into the third period and we discussed where I would be. I was high in the slot, they couldn't get me out of there, and they created a shot for me."

"For us, this was like a playoff game. We have to battle for every point we get. When you have a game like this, with all the injuries, it's huge. We really needed this game."

Thibault stopped all 20 shots over the final two periods and got

help from his defense, which gave the Panthers few rebound opportunities. Thibault had been in the nets for all seven games during the winless streak.

"This was the biggest win we've had so far this season," he said. "Tonight was a real confidence-builder. I've never seen so many tough injuries. We had to concentrate more defensively and tighten up. I'm really surprised with the way our young guys stepped up."

Scott Mellanby scored the lone goal for Florida, which had its five-game home unbeaten streak snapped. The Panthers are 4-6-3 since opening the season 16-3-6.

Avalanche 3, Stars 2

Christian Matte had his first NHL goal and assist as Colorado ended the unbeaten road streak of Dallas in a meeting of Western Conference leaders.

Uwe Krupp and Eric Lacroix added goals for the Pacific Division leaders. Colorado has the best home-ice record (13-4-3). Central pacesetter Dallas has league's best road record (12-5-1).

Mike Modano had his 15th goal for the Stars, who came within a game of matching the franchise road unbeaten streak of eight. Bill Huard got the other goal for the Stars.

Colorado's Rene Corbet took the puck from defenseman Grant Ledyard behind the Dallas net and fed Lacroix in front. Arturs Irbe stopped Lacroix, but Matte got the rebound and flipped it in at 10:37 of the first period.

Flyers 4, Flames 2

John LeClair scored twice and Ron Hextall made 26 saves to help the Philadelphia Flyers extend their unbeaten streak to 13 games.

The unbeaten streak is the longest in the NHL this season, bettering Florida's 8-0-4 mark to start the season.

Dale Hawerchuk had a goal and

assist for the Flyers. 11-0-2 in their last 13 games. Rookie Dainius Zubrus had the Flyers' other goal.

The victory moved Philadelphia into a first-place tie with Florida in the Atlantic Division.

Eric Lindros assisted on Hawerchuk's second-period goal to extend his points streak to 13 games. He has nine goals and 12 assists in that span.

Tommy Albain and Sandy McCarthy scored for the Flames, who are 1-4-1 in their last six contests.

Blackhawks 4, Whalers 3

Alexei Zhamnov scored the game-winning goal with 5:26 remaining as the Blackhawks erupted for three third-period goals.

Geoff Sanderson and Nelson Emerson scored in the second period to give the Whalers a 3-1 lead. But James Black and Chris Cheilos scored goals 89 seconds apart to tie it for the Blackhawks.

Jeff Hackett made 24 saves for the Blackhawks, who ended a six-game winless streak.

Blues 4, Bruins 2

Jim Campbell scored twice and had an assist and Grant Fuhr stopped 32 shots.

Defenseman Ricard Persson had a power-play goal and an assist for the Blues, who won despite being outshot 34-17. St. Louis improved to 2-1-1 in its last four games and is 2-3-1 since Jimmy Roberts took over as head coach for the fired Mike Keenan.

Jon Robloff scored his first two goals of the season for the Bruins, who are winless in their last three games (0-2-1).

SUNDAY'S RESULTS:
Philadelphia 4, Calgary 2
Montreal 2, Florida 1
St. Louis 4, Boston 2
Chicago 4, Hartford 3
Colorado 3, Dallas 2
San Jose at Vancouver, ppd. snow

Clark promises Manchester City 'happy new year'

LONDON (Reuters) - New Manchester City manager Frank Clark said yesterday it was the tremendous support from the club's fans that had persuaded him to join the struggling English First Division side.

Clark, who resigned as manager of Nottingham Forest, currently bottom of the Premier League, only 11 days ago, promised to give City's long-suffering fans "something to shout and smile about in the New Year."

City has slumped to fourth from bottom in the First Division after being relegated last season but Clark is undeterred by the club's problems.

"I have two aims," said Clark. "One to stabilize the club and the second to get it back in the Premier League."

"Manchester City is a club with a great tradition and enormous potential. It needs a bit of help."

"I looked at the crowd for the last home game against Port Vale. It was 30,000 plus and there were also 6,000 travelling supporters at Burnley. That's the sort of support that will enable the club to go somewhere and I hope to help Manchester City to do just that."

"It's amazing, they've had a traumatic season after relegation last year and the team is currently fourth bottom of the First Division and yet 30,000 turn up. It's absolutely fantastic and that's the one of the things that attracted me to the club."

It is not a new situation for Clark. He replaced Brian Clough at Nottingham Forest when the team was relegated in 1993 and took it straight back into the top flight.

"I had no second thoughts about joining Manchester City," said Clark.

"It was a very big disappointment for me to leave Forest. But when I got the call from City I knew what I was going to do. I have spoken to the chairman Francis Lee several times and I am quite excited by what I have heard."

"There'll be money to spend and that's obviously a big help," he said. "I will be assessing the playing staff as quickly as possible."

One immediate casualty was former City captain and manager Tony Book who was shown the door, ending a 30-year association with the club. Caretaker manager Phil Neal resigned on Sunday.



Colorado's Christian Matte scores a goal against Dallas goalie Arturs Irbe.

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	28	12	3	49	120	92
Florida	20	9	9	49	113	89
New Jersey	20	12	3	43	95	84
N.Y. Rangers	19	15	5	43	132	107
Washington	15	19	3	33	98	102
N.Y. Islanders	12	16	8	32	95	104
Tampa Bay	11	19	5	27	99	113

Northwest Division

W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA	
Buffalo	18	15	3	41	108	98
Pittsburgh	18	15	4	40	130	120
Hartford	17	13	8	40	111	117
Montreal	13	19	7	33	120	138
Boston	13	16	6	32	103	127
Ottawa	11	16	7	29	94	102

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	22	12	4	47	108	97
Detroit	20	11	6	46	116	73
St. Louis	17	20	2	38	111	129
Phoenix	16	17	4	36	100	117
Chicago	15	19	2	33	103	107
Toronto	16	22	0	32	117	135

Pacific Division

W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA	
Colorado	22	10	5	49	131	89
Edmonton	16	19	4	33	123	122
Vancouver	16	18	1	33	105	118
Calgary	13	20	5	31	95	110
San Jose	13	19	4	30	82	116
Los Angeles	13	20	4	30	100	127
Anaheim	12	19	5	29	103	115

NHL SCORING LEADERS

Player	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
Jagr, PI	37	23	23	56	34
Lemieux, PIT	36	25	31	56	26
Grezlay, NYR	38	14	38	52	8
Sundin, TOR	38	23	27	50	22
Sakic, COL	37	15	34	49	18
Selanne, ANA	36	19	26	45	14
Forsberg, COL	31	12	31	43	20
Francis, PIT	37	12	31	43	4
Yezerman, DET	37	11	32	43	28
Lacaille, PHI	38	24	17	41	32
Shanahan, DET	36	19	22	41	58
Leetch, NYR	38	9	31	40	20
Sanderson, HAR	36	23	16	39	17
Pelley, NYI	35	22	17	39	31
Messias, NYR	33	20	19	39	29
Recchi, MON	38	16	23	39	38
Therrien, PIT	37	22	16	38	85
Amonte, CHI	40	22	16	38	32
Koivu, MON	30	13	25	38	20
Savage, MON	37	13	24	37	27
Bordas, WAS	34	19	17	36	39
Modano, DAL	37	15	21	36	6
Ozolinsh, COL	37	11	25	36	38

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Iowa crushes Texas Tech in Alamo Bowl

SAN ANTONIO (AP) - Sedrick Shaw rushed for 113 yards and upstaged Texas Tech's Byron Hanspard as No. 21 Iowa shut out the Red Raiders 27-0 Sunday night in the Alamo Bowl.

Shaw, Iowa's career rushing leader, carried 20 times in surpassing his season average of 91 yards per game. Hanspard, a 2,000-yard rusher, carried 18 times for 64 yards, falling far short of his 190-yard season average.

The Hawkeyes have faced eight of the nation's top 20 rushers this season, and only Northwestern's Darnell Antrny managed to reach his season average.

The Hawkeyes (9-3) finished their thrashing of the Red Raiders (7-5) with a 14-yard touchdown run by Rodney Elber with 2:09 left, capping a 99-yard drive.

It was the first shutout of Texas Tech since a 31-0 loss to Arkansas in 1987.

Hanspard, the Doak Walker Award winner, was kept in check by a Hawkeye defense that shut out two of its last three opponents.

Hanspard, a junior, was expected to announce yesterday whether he will make himself eligible for the NFL draft.

AP's top 25 college basketball teams:

1. Kansas (10-0) did not play.
2. Wake Forest (9-0) did not play.
3. Kentucky (10-1) beat North Carolina-Ashville 105-51; beat Ohio State 81-65.
4. Michigan (8-1) lost to Memphis, 73-72; beat Washington State 85-79.
5. Iowa State (8-0) did not play.
6. Clemson (10-1) did not play.
7. Cincinnati (5-2) beat Western Kentucky 81-57.
8. Utah (8-2) beat Wisconsin-Milwaukee 77-65; beat UC Irvine 75-50.
9. Villanova (8-1) beat Robert Morris 118-54.
10. North Carolina (8-1) did not play.
11. North Carolina (8-1) did not play.
12. Duke (8-2) did not play.
13. Indiana (13-1) beat Butler 89-84; OT; beat Colgate 63-46; beat Valparaiso 72-51.
14. N. Mexico (11-1) beat Jackson St. 98-46; beat Bucknell 67-57; beat Miss. 75-64.
15. Minnesota (10-1) beat Alabama State 114-54; beat Long Island U. 104-54.
16. Louisville (10-0) beat Tenn. St. 102-54; beat No. 25 Boston College 89-65, 20T.
17. Texas (9-2) did not play.
18. Texas (9-2) did not play.
19. Alabama (10-0) lost to San Jose State 80-69; lost to Santa Clara 77-62.
20. Texas Tech (11-0) beat New Mexico State 122-105; beat Wyoming 77-74.
21. Arkansas (8-2) beat Southern Utah State 108-67; beat Phil. 66-59; beat Hawaii 75-59.
22. Stanford (7-1) beat Navy 85-68.
23. Oregon (8-0) beat Tenn. 82-62; beat Oregon State 89-64.
24. Oregon (8-0) beat Tenn. 82-62; beat Oregon State 89-64.
25. Boston Col. (8-2) beat Conn. Coll. 81-53; lost to No. 16 Louisville 89-65, 20T.

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Weizman gets red carpet treatment in India

BATSHEVA TSUR
NEW DELHI

TO the sound of a 21-gun salute, President Ezer Weizman and his wife Reuma drove into the vast courtyard of the presidential palace in New Delhi yesterday morning for their official welcome to India.

It was done with pomp and ceremony and much warmth.

Outside the mammoth red and yellow sandstone palace, which has 370 rooms and stands on 330 acres, President Shankar Dayal Sharma was waiting to greet him. The president's personal bodyguards - all six feet tall, Sikhs wearing red and gold uniforms with purple turbans - lined their horses neatly, while the guests sat shaded by canopies on leather chairs below which soft carpets had been laid.

A band of monkeys roamed wild on the sprawling rooftop of the palace.

Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, dressed in the northern Indian white kurta with a brown shawl, headed the list of cabinet ministers and other dignitaries on hand.

Across the gigantic courtyard, the strains of the two countries' national anthems wafted.

Walking down the red carpet, Weizman inspected an honor guard of army, navy and air force officers, then turned to shake hands with the crowd invited to meet him.

It was around 10 a.m. when the presidential motorcade left through the magnificent Moghul Gardens with ornate fountains and drove down the hill to the Raj Path, lined with Israeli and Indian flags.

The entire route was cordoned off and hundreds of thousands of New Delhi residents caught in the morning rush-hour waited patiently for the presidential entourage to pass. After a brief stop at India Gate - the memorial to 90,000 Indian soldiers who fell in World War I - Weizman drove to Gandhi's grave, Raj Ghat, overlooking the holy Yamuna river.

In stockinged feet, the Weizmans and their entourage silently made their way to the flower-bedecked grave. Weizman laid a simple white wreath to the sound of devotional music.

But not all of the day was devoted to ceremony. Following talks between Weizman and Foreign

Minister I. K. Gujral and, then, with the prime minister, four agreements for bilateral cooperation were signed.

"This is an historic visit," Gowda said, as Israel's ambassador Yehoyada Haim and Indian ministers signed agreements for technical, industrial, cultural and educational, and agricultural cooperation.

"We appreciate the importance of India, now more than ever... Our countries have much to share," Weizman declared.

Later, at a luncheon he hosted in Weizman's honor, Gowda again stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral relations and praised Israel's technological achievements.

Yesterday's talks reportedly covered a wide range of bilateral and international issues. In the technology sphere, it was agreed that India would send computer-science experts to help cover the current shortage in Israel.

During discussions on the peace process, Gujral is believed to have made known India's dissatisfaction over the delays in concluding a Hebron redeployment.

Weizman also apparently ran into hitches with regard to six young Israelis held on drug charges in India. The Indian prime minister explained that, despite India's warm feelings toward Israel, he was bound by law and could not simply ask his president to pardon the Israelis. Any foreigner caught with more than 5 grams of marijuana is considered a drug trafficker and receives a mandatory 10 year sentence, he explained.

"This is not an easy matter," Weizman said, later. "The youngsters were in the wrong."

But, on a personal note, it was all smiles. "This is a homecoming" for the Israeli president, said India's protocol head, M. Venkataraman. And, at the luncheon, the prime minister took pains to wish Weizman a pleasant return to Bangalore, where he was a British Royal Air Force pilot more than 50 years ago.

The media again gave prominent coverage to the visit yesterday, with *The Pioneer*, a leading paper, heading its editorial: "Shalom, Mr. President."



President Ezer Weizman (left) shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda as Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma (center) looks on during a welcoming ceremony for Weizman in New Delhi yesterday. (Reuters)

India may buy Israeli defense systems

BATSHEVA TSUR
NEW DELHI

INDIA is interested in purchasing defense systems from Israel, a source in President Ezer Weizman's entourage revealed yesterday.

The negotiations over the sale are at an advanced stage, the source said, noting that India was a relatively untapped market for the defense industry.

As defense ties between the two countries grow closer, Israel is looking into the upgrading of India's MIG-21 fighters. Israel Aircraft Industries head Moshe Keret, who was in Russia Sunday, was due to fly to New Delhi

yesterday to hold discussions on the deal, together with other Israeli defense representatives.

The Press Trust of India reported yesterday the Indian navy is considering buying advanced multi-mode maritime surveillance radar from Israel, following the acquisition by Pakistan of three P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft from the US.

The radar can be fitted onto patrol helicopters and can track up to 100 targets at a time, according to the report. The proposal will be discussed during Weizman's visit, the report added.

The radar proposal comes close on the heels of an Indian purchase of two Super Dvora MKII patrol boats. The \$10 million deal was signed earlier this month in Tel Aviv.

Further sales of patrol boats will be discussed during the weeklong presidential visit, an IAI official said.

WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy.

AROUND THE WORLD

City	Low	High	Wind
Amsterdam	-01	06	04
Berlin	-11	12	04
Buenos Aires	22	29	16
Cairo	09	26	13
Chicago	-04	20	21
Copenhagen	06	13	07
Frankfurt	-10	14	09
Geneva	06	21	07
Helsinki	-09	18	02
Hong Kong	17	23	15
Jakarta	19	26	12
London	02	08	03
Los Angeles	14	27	13
Moscow	-02	20	05
Mumbai	-11	12	02
Moscow	09	16	05
New York	-06	25	05
Paris	-06	23	03
Rome	09	16	03
Stockholm	-08	21	03
Sydney	18	24	03
Tel Aviv	12	26	01
Toronto	-04	25	13
Vancouver	15	22	13
Zurich	-12	10	06

Weizman taken ill during dinner

PRESIDENT Ezer Weizman was taken suddenly ill late last night during a state banquet hosted in his honor on the first day of his visit to New Delhi by Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma.

The president started vomiting and received immediate attention from his personal physician, Prof. Avi Rifkind. The state banquet was stopped for about 10 minutes.

Weizman later returned to the banquet table in the presidential palace and sat through the end of the meal. He then went to his hotel to rest.

Batsheva Tsur

Bikur Holim doctor's surgery alleviates month-old Beduin girl's breathing problems

JUDY SIEGEL

A MONTH-OLD Beduin baby girl born with a bone in her sinuses that prevented her from breathing every time she nursed was successfully treated by endoscopic surgery at Jerusalem's Bikur Holim Hospital yesterday.

Her mother, Fatma Kavva of Tel Arad in the south gave birth at a different hospital. However, the baby was transferred to Bikur Holim because Dr. Elimech Deutsch, head of the ear-nose-and-throat department, runs the country's only unit that performs such "key-hole" surgery on newborns for otolaryngology disorders.

Dr. Ya'acov Armon, acting head of the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit, explained that babies up to the age of several weeks are unable to breathe through their mouth. If the nasal passages are completely blocked, it's impossible for the baby to nurse. A feeding tube was inserted down the throat of the 2.6-kilo baby, but this could not be a long-term solution.

In the operating room, Deutsch inserted an endoscope through one of her nostrils, which has a tiny optic fiber that transmits video photographs to a screen that the surgeon watches. When he reached the bone blocking her air passages, he fractured it, creating a new passageway for normal breathing. Half an hour after the surgery began, the baby was breathing easily and did not need a respirator.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- Dimona textile workers occupy plant**
Dimona Mayor Gabi Laloush and a representative of the receivers of the closed Dimona Textiles plant yesterday held negotiations with laid-off workers who had occupied the factory. The workers were protesting that a compensation package has yet to be worked out, more than six months after the plant closed. *Itm*
- Ashkelon man drowns**
A 70-year-old Ashkelon man drowned off one of the town's beaches yesterday morning. A young man who tried to save him also got into trouble, but was pulled from the water by others. *Itm*
- Body on beach not murder victim**
The body of a man in his 40s discovered on a Herzliya beach on Saturday night was not that of a murder victim, the Abu Kabir Forensics Institute determined yesterday. An autopsy discovered the man had drowned. *Itm*
- Bias alleged in State religious schools**
The High Court of Justice yesterday gave the Petah Tikva State Religious schools 30 days to justify a policy which effectively segregates Sephardim and Ashkenazim. The schools set up two different tracks, a Torah track and a science track, but de facto only Sephardim and new immigrants were put in the science track. The petition was filed by MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) and two parents whose daughter was denied entry into the Torah track. *Evelyn Gordon*

Study finds selenium helps prevent cancer

JUDY SIEGEL

SELENIUM, which is found in vegetables and other foods, has been discovered by US researchers to offer protection against several types of cancer.

The study by Dr. Larry Clark of the Arizona Cancer Center in Tucson is published in the latest issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. It confirmed previous findings of low selenium levels in the blood of thousands of Chinese cancer patients.

In a study of 1,300 people who took a daily supplement of selenium in "primary yeast" form, the overall cancer risk was cut by nearly 40 percent. They had 46% less lung cancer, 58% less colon and rectal cancer, and 63% less prostate cancer. In addition, when they did get cancer, they were 50% more likely to survive it than those who had not taken selenium.

Prof. Samario Chaitchik, head of the oncology institute at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital, said previous studies showed that people living in areas where selenium was missing from the soil and whose diet lacked that mineral had considerably higher cancer risks than those with selenium in their diet.

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Winning cards

IN yesterday's Chance drawing, the winning cards were the 9 of spades, the 8 of hearts, the 9 of diamonds and the jack of clubs.

Cleared Ganot could take a top police job

RAINE MARCUS

CMDR. Ya'acov Ganot, the northern district police chief who was suspended on charges of bribery, is expected to become the national police operations chief, now that he has been acquitted.

Ganot was cleared of charges of taking bribes, fraud and breach of trust, and a subsequent appeal by the state to the Supreme Court against his acquittal was also rejected Sunday, giving Ganot a clean bill of health.

Sources said Ganot could expect to be appointed shortly, replacing Cmdr. Danny Brinker, who will become the southern district chief.

Ganot took voluntary leave from the force in July 1994, pending an investigation against him. It was alleged that his friend, building contractor Subhi Tanos, renovated his home in return for favors. Amoz Azani replaced him. Azani now has been appointed Prisons Service Commissioner, replacing Arye Bibi, who is expected to run to be mayor of Petah Tikva.

Ganot was charged with bribing, taking, fraud and breach of trust. In May 1996, Nazareth District Court cleared him of all six charges. Tanos was also acquitted.

The District Attorney decided to appeal the acquittal, but that was rejected on Sunday.

Now Ganot can officially serve in a senior post on the force again, although sources said his name had been blackened because of the trial.

Ganot, who has not served in the force since his voluntary suspension, apparently wants the prestigious National Operations leadership. Police sources said his appointment would be bound to annoy some senior officers, "who will go over the court verdicts with a fine-tooth comb."

Two police commanders are currently without positions - Ya'acov Borovsky, the president of the police appeals court, and Yossi Zecharia, who has just completed a course of study - and Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani has to decide where to place them.

Cmdr. Avi Cohen has become the national intelligence chief, a new position working in liaison with the Internal Security Ministry and the national police headquarters. Hezi Leder, the outgoing police intelligence chief, is waiting for a new post.

TA chief rabbi: Boycott Shabbat violators

RABBI Haim David Halevy, the chief rabbi of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, has recommended boycotting businesses that open on Shabbat.

Halevy said he had used the boycott tactic when he had previously served as chief rabbi of Rishon LeZion.

Shmuel Altalef, the head of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Religious Council, said Halevy's suggestion would be brought before the council's Shabbat committee for discussion, and then the council leadership would make a decision on the matter. *(Itm)*